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GULIELMA: WIFE OF WILLIAM PENN



BUST OF SIR WILLIAM SPRINGETT
from his tomb in Ringmer Church

GULIELMA:
WIFE of WILLIAM PENN

“A Woman of Ten Thousand”—WILLIAM PENN

By
L. V. HODGKIN
(MRS. JOHN HOLDSWORTH)

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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DEDICATED

TO

TWO QUAKER HISTORIANS

RUFUS M. JONES OF HAVERFORD, U.S.A.

AND

ERNEST E. TAYLOR OF YORK

FRIENDS, COUNSELLORS, HELPERS, IN TWO HEMISPHERES,

THROUGHOUT FORTY YEARS

“As the Memory of the Just is blessed, so there seems to me a Blessing upon those that have a right Remembrance of them”—WILLIAM PENN

PREFACE

FOR nearly thirty years a kind friend and critic has urged me to make a *Second Book of Quaker Saints*, retelling for children some of the stories connected with the Early Friends who lived and died round Jordans in Buckinghamshire. Time and opportunity for the work never came until the isolation of a wartime autumn and winter, far away in the country (1941-2), made it possible to consider the idea.

At the beginning I intended to gather in thought a group of modern children round me, and to retell for them the histories of the Penns and Peningtons, rather as Maria Webb did in her well-known book a hundred years ago. "A woman's book" John William Graham has called it, "but none the worse for that." I knew that mine would have to be written in simpler, less didactic style than this old volume, well known in Quaker households two or three generations ago. Also, it would have to embody many new facts and documents revealed by later research.

Re-reading history, however, for this purpose, I gradually became convinced that my book was not going to be for children. To retell these stories for a child might indeed be possible. Janet Gray has done part of it, on the other side of the Atlantic, in her excellent *Penn*, published by the Junior Literature Guild, New York. But, I felt, it was not children so much as older people who would really appreciate these life-histories most, if they could only listen while the actual men and women in the drama recounted their joys and sorrows, their perplexities and struggles, in their own language. And this, thanks to the Quaker habit, even three hundred years ago, of keeping full diaries, is abundantly possible for us to-day. When I tried, for instance, to put young Mary Proude's early religious difficulties into my own words, describing them in the

third person, they lost their flavour and became flat at once. But let her speak for herself in her delightful seventeenth-century English, let her tell of what "I suffered," and how "I puzzled" in her pre-Quaker days—then everything at once became fresh and vivid.

It is a piece of marvellous good fortune that all these different journals and letters should have been preserved for us. They enable us to listen consecutively first to one and then to another narrator, as each takes up and lays down the tale in turn. Mary, Isaac, Thomas, William—Mother, Stepfather, Friend, Lover, Husband; all loving, and beloved by, Gulielma, the centre of them all. She alone kept no journal, only three of her letters have survived. But she shines through the other accounts, brings them into focus—till in the end we know her, almost as we should know her younger contemporary, Pompilia in *The Ring and the Book*, even without her own self-revelation.

This then was the book I wished to read; not to have to take down one volume after another and dig out the story from all the different autobiographies and piece them together, but to read it straight through in one continuous narrative. Therefore, since no one else seems to have provided just that book, I have finally had to make it myself.

Every word has been written out, at least once, by hand, since here, as in my *Day Book of Counsel and Comfort from the Epistles of George Fox*, it was only by discovering what I myself actually felt to be worth transcribing, that I could ascertain what my readers would find it worth their while to read. For, it must be confessed, many of the original sources (not all) are immensely long; and also (bless them!) distinctly prosy in parts. The jewels do need to be dug out of their matrix, to be cut often, polished occasionally, reset and strung on a consecutive thread. It is that thread I have tried to supply.

The group of children who listened to *A Book of Quaker Saints* a quarter of a century ago are children no longer. They are parents themselves now with children of their own. But even these busy fathers and mothers are ready to humour the old story-teller of their childhood when she takes down the

precious folios in which other men and women have enshrined their life-experiences, to share with them once more. It is for this audience, and also for older boys and girls, that I have included some comments here and there, when the reading was dropped for a few minutes' talk or discussion.

I regret that the difficulties of travel in wartime have prevented my visiting all the chief places mentioned, especially in Sussex.

The book is not intended only for Friends, and therefore I have not hesitated to tell again the old stories we all know well, as for instance about Milton and his "pretty Box" at Chalfont; and even a few of our venerable, and possibly not historical, legends such as "Wear it as long as thou canst," about Penn's sword, in which I, for one, still fervently believe.

To fasten the narrative more securely into its frame I have also taken advantage of any mention, in the Diaries quoted, of persons or places well known in English history. With this object I have even occasionally enlarged my canvas to include secondary events not strictly in focus in the main scene. For example, Thomas Ellwood's short detention "in the Greyhound Inn at Maidenhead" is mentioned in detail (although such detentions were everyday occurrences at that time) because it was in that particular inn, thirteen years before, that Charles I bade his last farewell to his three children.

Again, the death of Gulielma's young stepbrother, Isaac Penington, on his way home from Barbadoes, is also alluded to, not for its own sake, but because a contemporary letter has an endorsement by George Fox saying that the mate on the boy's ship was a Quaker, commonly known as "Richard Carver that carried the King on his back after Worcester Fight"; that is, who helped Charles II to land in France from a small boat on his escape.

In the early days of the Society of Friends there was at one time a danger of a serious rift between the followers of George Fox and of William Penn. Even to-day the division is not entirely at an end. If a choice must be made, I confess myself altogether a Fox-ite. But in these five years of happy work I

have learned deeply to appreciate Penn's true greatness. I know better now how much his Quakerism cost him. His unflinching courage, his faithfulness, his tenderheartedness, and many other of his strong points, I have learned to venerate and love as never before, while I studied him more closely. Especially here, in his ardent youth, he is a Quaker hero indeed.

Still, this book does not attempt to add another to the many biographies of William Penn. It is only an endeavour to recapture something of the grace and charm of her who was not only the inspiration of his manhood but also his sweetheart, his love, his wife, Gulielma.

L. V. HOLDSWORTH

Bareppa House,
near Falmouth,
29 July 1946

CONTENTS

BOOK ONE: MARY

“A Woman of great Wisdom and ready Speech”—T. ELLWOOD

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. A PURITAN GIRLHOOD: “That early fragrant time before the Civil War”	2
II. MARRIAGE: “We married without a Ring” .	9
III. “THAT TERRIBLE WINTER OF 1643”: “A young Gent. of Religion and Courage”	12
IV. WIDOWHOOD: “The Child of Dangers and Agonies”	22

BOOK TWO: ISAAC

“A Man of an acute wit and of great endowments”—W. SEWEL

I. THE ALDERMAN’S SON: “Long-Mournful & Sorely Distressed”	30
II. SEEKING AND FINDING: “Love is the beautiful Thing”	33
III. ASSURANCE: “Swimming in the Life” . .	38
IV. AFTERWARDS: “I think not of him without delight”	43

BOOK THREE: THOMAS

“A Man of a comely aspect”—TESTIMONY

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. GULIELMA'S PLAYFELLOW: “A little busy Boy” .	50
II. “BUFFETINGS”: “The Young Man is Reach'd” .	57
III. “MY MASTER MILTON”: “After he lost his sight he had a Man to read to him”	71

BOOK FOUR: GULIELMA

“A very Pearl of Prettiness”—MASSON'S *Milton*

I. “SPARKLINGS OF DESIRE”: “The Importunity of many Suitors”	80
II. JOHN MILTON'S FRIEND: “His harmonick & ingeniose Soule did lodge in a beautiful and well-proportioned body”	88
III. A QUAKER COURTSHIP: “Affectionate Kindness in Order to Marriage”	96
IV. A QUAKER ADVENTURE: “Most equal & undaunted in Danger”	99

BOOK FIVE: WILLIAM

“The greatest Historic Figure of his Age”—LORD ACTON

I. EARLY DAYS: “As a Child Alone”	108
II. YOUTH: “A most modish Person”	118
III. CONVINCEMENT: “No Cross, No Crown”	122
IV. BETROTHAL: “He for whom she was Reserved” .	138

BOOK SIX: "GULI PENN"

"*A Match of Providence's making*"—W. PENN

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. MARRIAGE: "A heavenly and spiritual joyning"	152
II. ABSENCE: "My Wife is sweetly consenting and satisfied"	164
III. SOLITUDE: "They that love beyond the World cannot be separated by it"	173
IV. REUNION: "The best of Wives and Women" .	186
V. DEPARTURE: "I shall see thee again" . .	195
APPENDICES	203
INDEX	223

ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece

BUST OF SIR WILLIAM SPRINGETT, FROM HIS TOMB
IN RINGMER CHURCH

(Photograph by Edward Reeves)

Facing page 46

PORTRAIT OF WILLIAM PENN IN ARMOUR, 1666

(From an old engraving)

Facing page 47

INTERIOR OF KING JOHN'S FARM, CHORLEY WOOD
FRIENDS' BURIAL GROUND, JORDANS

(By permission of the Literature Committee of the Society of Friends)

Both reproduced from Graham's Life of William Penn, by courtesy of Messrs. Headley Bros. Ltd.

Facing page 84

FACSIMILE OF A LETTER FROM GULIELMA SPRINGETT
TO WILLIAM PENN IN IRELAND, 1670

(From the Public Record Office)

Facing page 85

REPUTED PORTRAIT OF GULIELMA

(From an engraving in the Library of the Society of Friends)

Facing page 148

HUNGER HILL, THE HOME OF THOMAS ELLWOOD

(From an engraving in the Library of the Society of Friends)

WARMINGHURST PLACE

(From a map in the British Museum)

Facing page 149

BASING HOUSE, RICKMANSWORTH

(From a pencil drawing in the Library of the Society of Friends)

INSCRIPTION ON THE TOMB IN
RINGMER CHURCH

Here lyeth the body of
SRWILLIAM SPRINGETT KNT.
eldest sonne and heire of Herbert Springett
of Svssex Esq;
he married Mary Prevd the only davghter and heir of
SrJohn Prevd Knt (Collonell in the service of the
Vnited Provinces vnder the command of ye
Prince of Orange)
and of Anne Fagge his wife one of the Co-heires of
Edward Fagge
of Ewell neare Feversham in the Covnty of Kent Esq;
he had issve by Mary his wife one sonne John
Springett and one davghter Gvilielma Maria
Posthvma Springett;
he (being a Collonell in ye service of ye Parliament
at ye taking in of Arvndel Castle in Svssex. there)
contracted a sickness
whereof hee died Febrvary ye 3th An^o Dni: 1643
being: 23: yeares of age.
His wife in testimony of her deare affection to him,
hath erected
this Monvment to his memory.

“W Penn, esq. marricd Gulielma Maria
Springet, daughter of Sir William Springet of
the Springets of the Broyles in Sussex. She
was a *posthuma* of her father, a young gent. of
religion and courage who dyed at the siege of
Arundel. His daughter was his image in person
and qualities. . . .”

*From “ Brief Lives chiefly of Contemporaries,” set
down by John Aubrey between the years 1669 and
1696*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

IT is fitting that my gratitude for help in preparing this book should be due to friends on both sides of the Atlantic.

In England I have specially to thank once more, among old friends, John L. Nickalls and Muriel Hicks, Librarians at Friends House, London; and my sister, Ellen S. Bosanquet.

In America my grateful acknowledgments are due to three new friends: To Janet Whitney for leave to quote her perfect description of a Quaker wedding from her book *John Woolman*. To Albert Cook Myers, who has spent nearly forty years studying the life of William Penn and ransacking the world for information about him. He kindly allows me to quote various facts from his *William Penn's Early Life in Brief, 1644-1674*. This is already published and is one of the first fruits of his long labours. He also allows me to reproduce two or three of the illustrations included therein. But above all, my thanks are due to Prof. H. J. Cadbury, D.D., Ph.D., Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard University. He has not only read my manuscript and my proofs, given me much encouragement and saved me from various mistakes, but with wonderful generosity allows me to use here much original material that he has discovered, never before published. This includes a set of verses composed by William Penn when imprisoned in Newgate in 1671, annotated in his own script: "Sent to G. M. Springett, my Dr Wife since"; and also two love-letters, one from William Penn to Gulielma Springett and one from her to him. (See Appendix III.) The latter, in her own handwriting, is reproduced in facsimile in this volume. For this unique generosity I can only express my most grateful thanks.

L. V. HOLDSWORTH

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS OF PRINCIPAL SOURCES

(approximately in order as first used here)

Experiences. *Experiences in the Life of Mary Penington*, written by herself. Edited, with Introduction and Notes, by Norman Penney, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. (Philadelphia and London, 1911.)

Webb. *The Penns and Peningtons*, by Maria Webb. (London, 1867, and later editions.) This is the framework of my narrative. (Only a few letters quoted directly.)

Aubrey. *Brief Lives chiefly of Contemporaries*. Set down by John Aubrey between the years 1669 and 1696. Edited by Andrew Clark (2 vols.) (Oxford, 1898.)

Sussex. *Sussex in the Great Civil War*, by C. Thomas-Stanford. (London, 1910.)

Ellwood. *The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood*, written by his own hand. (London, 1714, and later editions.)

Crump. *The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood*. Edited by C. G. Crump. (London, 1900.) Contains valuable Notes.

Robinson. *The Penn Country and the Chilterns*, by R. J. Robinson. (London, 1929.)

Penington. *The Works of . . . Isaac Penington*. (1681, and later editions.)

D.N.B. *Dictionary of National Biography*. (1885 onwards.)

Jnl.F.H.S. *The Journal of the Friends Historical Society*. (London, 1903, in progress.)

A.R.B. *Letters &c of Early Friends*. Edited by A. R. Barclay. (London, 1841.)

Myers. *William Penn's Early Life in Brief*, by Albert Cook Myers. (Moylan, Pennsylvania, 1937.) An invaluable small book.

Hull. *William Penn, a Topical Biography*, by William I. Hull, Ph.D., F.R.Hist.S. (Oxford, 1937.) Chief source of quotations in Books V and VI of this volume, with the following:

Folio Penn. *The Works of William Penn*, with a Prefix containing the history of his life. (2 vols. folio.) (London, 1726.)

Janney. *Life of William Penn*, by Samuel M. Janney. (Philadelphia, 1851, and later editions.)

Graham. *William Penn*, by John William Graham. (London, 1917.)

Short Jnl. *The Short Journal and Itinerary Journals of George Fox* (including the *Haistwell Diary*). Edited by Norman Penney, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. (Cambridge, 1925.)

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

(of occasional sources quoted, alphabetical)

A.N.B. *The Personality of George Fox*, by Alfred Neave Brayshaw (London, 1933), and *The Quakers*. (London, 1921, and later editions.)

Beginnings. *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, by W. C. Braithwaite, B.A., LL.B. (London, 1912.)

Besse, "Suffs." *A Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers from 1650 to 1689*, compiled by Joseph Besse (2 vols.). (London, 1753.)

Brailsford. *The Making of William Penn*, by Mabel R. Brailsford. (London, 1910.)

Camb. Jnl. *The Journal of George Fox edited from the MSS.*, by Norman Penney, F.S.A. (2 vols.) (Cambridge, England, 1911.)

F.P.T. *First Publishers of Truth*, being Early records (not previously printed) of the introduction of Quakerism into the counties of England and Wales. (London, 1907.)

Hess. *The Message of Isaac Penington, English Mystic*, by M. Whitcomb Hess. (*Friends Quarterly Examiner*, 1940.)

H.S.P. Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Jnl.F.H.S. *The Journal of the Friends Historical Society*. (London, 1903, in progress.)

Pepys. *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*. Many editions.

P.M.H.B. *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*. (Philadelphia, 1879, in progress.)

Q.P.-B. *A Quaker Post-Bag*, edited by Mrs. Locker Lampson. (London, 1910.)

Q.S. of Cornwall. *A Quaker Saint of Cornwall, Loveday Hambly and her Guests*, by L. V. Hodgkin. (London, 1927.)

xx KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS OF OCCASIONAL SOURCES QUOTED

Q.S. *A Book of Quaker Saints*, by L. V. Hodgkin. (4 editions: out of print.) (London, 1917.)

Romance. *The Romance of the Inward Light*, by L. V. Hodgkin. (Out of print.) (London, 1933.)

Sewel. *History of the . . . Quakers*, by W. Sewel. (London, 1722, and later editions.)

Second Period. *The Second Period of Quakerism*, by W. C. Braithwaite. (London, 1919.)

Shoemaker. *The Shoemaker of Dover*, by L. V. Hodgkin. (London, 1943.)

Snell. *The Minute Book of the Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends for the Upperville of Buckinghamshire*. Edited by B. S. Snell. (Bucks Archæological Soc., 1937.)

State Papers. *Extracts from State Papers relating to Friends 1654 to 1672*. Edited by Norman Penney, F.S.A. (London, 1912).

BOOK ONE

MARY

“A Woman of great Wisdom and of ready Speech”

—T. ELLWOOD

Unspecified extracts in Book One are taken from
Experiences in the Life of Mary Penington

Chapter One

A PURITAN GIRLHOOD

“That early fragrant time before the Civil War”

—A. L. ROWSE

ON his weary climb up the steep Mountain of Purgatory Dante speaks of “The backward look that enheartens the Pilgrim.” Old age, of all times, is the one most suited to this backward look, and to indulgence in reminiscences when at length the stretch of years behind can be seen, as it were, in perspective. Three centuries ago, Mary Penington, the mother-in-law of William Penn, looked backward in old age for the benefit of her descendants. She left behind her two narratives of her youth, one written for her own daughter, Gulielma Maria Penn, the other for that daughter’s son, her grandson, Springett Penn. Thus a double account remains, telling in her own words the story of her childhood and girlhood. This gives an intimate picture of Puritan country life in the second quarter of the seventeenth century, just before the rise of Quakerism. It also shows some of the forces that, influencing Mary in her youth, through her went later to the making of her daughter Gulielma and her descendants.

Mary Proude was born in 1624, the same year as George Fox. She was the only child and heiress of Sir John Proude¹ of Goodmanstone Court, Kent, by his wife, Anne, daughter of Edward Fagge of Ewell, near Faversham. Sir John Proude was a wealthy landowner in Kent. His marriage to Anne Fagge took place on 6 March 1622, in the church of St. Margaret Pattons, London. He took service with the Prince of Orange

¹ Or Preva. Both names are used.

and was killed at the siege of Grol in Guelderland¹ in 1627. His wife, Anne, Lady Proude, also died in 1627, leaving Mary, their child, an orphan of only three years old. Lady Proude's sister had married another Kentish landowner, Sir Edward Partridge, but she also seems to have died about this time, for when Mary came to be an inmate of Sir Edward Partridge's household she was brought up, not by her own aunt, but by Sir Edward's widowed sister, Madam Springett, who was, apparently, acting as head of his household. Before this, however, Mary says she "found a home in the family of some loose Protestants" whose name is unknown but who were apparently nominal members of the Church of England.

Her reminiscences are at first almost entirely occupied with her own spiritual history in childhood and youth. Perhaps this was natural at that period, when religion was as absorbing a topic as cricket, football or politics is now; when, as G. M. Trevelyan says,

Religion was in the air. It filled the newsletters and pamphlets of the day, as strikes and sports items crowd our dailies. (*English Social History*, p. 239.)

As the years pass, the Journal shows how the claims of outward life grow more absorbing, and receive more of the young diarist's attention. Her account begins:

The first scripture I remember to have taken notice of was "Blessed are they that hunger & thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." This I heard taken for a text when I was about eight years of age, & under the care of the people who were a kind of loose Protestants, that minded no more of religion than to go to their worship-house on first-days to hear a canonical priest preach in the morning and read common prayers in the afternoon.² They used common prayers in the family and observed superstitious customs and times, days of feasting and fasting, Christmas (so-called), Good Friday, Lent etc.

¹ Grol in Guelderland is not marked in modern maps. It will be found in an atlas of the seventeenth century and is situated to the east of Zutphen and to the north-east of Arnhem. Details about the siege and capture of Grol will be found in the *History of Holland*, by C. M. Davies, under the year 1627.

² There was much formal Puritanism at this time, and a generation earlier in 1591 the Mayor and Jurats of Rye were troubled about "a small secte of purytanes more holy in shewe than in dede." *Sussex*, p. 23.

About this time I was afraid, in the night, of such things as run in my mind by day, of spirits, thieves etc. When alone in the fields & possessed with fears, I accounted prayers my help and safety; so would often say (as I had been taught) the Lord's Prayer, hoping thereby to be delivered from the things I feared.

After some time I went to live with some that appeared to be more religious. [Apparently these are Sir Edward Partridge and his family.]

They would not admit of sports on first days, calling first day the Sabbath. They went to hear two sermons a day, from a priest that was not loose in his conversation, he used a form of prayer before his sermon and read the common prayer after it. I was now about ten or eleven years of age. A maid-servant that waited on me and the rest of the children, was very zealous in their way: She used to read Smith's and Preston's¹ sermons on first days, between the sermon times.

What a Sunday for children! Three or four sermons to follow every week!

But [Mary continues] I diligently heard her read, and at length liked not to use the Lord's Prayer alone, but got a prayer-book and read prayers, mornings and evenings; and that Scripture of "howling on their beds" was much on my mind: by it I was checked from saying prayers in my bed. About this time I began to be very serious about religion.

One day after we came from the place of public worship the maid before mentioned read one of Preston's sermons, the text was "Pray continually." In this sermon much was said respecting prayer. . . . This thing wrought much on my mind. I found that I knew not what true prayer was. . . . My mind was deeply exercised about this thing. When she had done reading and all were gone out of the chamber, I shut the door, and in great distress flung myself on the bed and oppressedly cried out "Lord, what is prayer?"

Poor little troubled mite! Her difficulty was whether it was right to use a prayer "out of a book," composed for other people's needs.²

¹ Henry Smith (d. 1591), lecturer at St. Clement Danes; sermons first published 1599. John Preston, D.D. (1587-1628), preacher at Lincoln's Inn. His writings first published 1615.

² In the nineteenth century a later Quaker Saint, Caroline Emilia Stephen, had much the same "stop in her mind" when attending Church of England services. Hence her welcome of the silence in Quaker meetings.

This exercise continued so on my mind that at night, when I used to read a prayer out of a book, I could only weep and remain in trouble. At this time I had never heard of any people that prayed any other way than by reading prayers out of a book, or composing themselves. I remember one morning it came into my mind that I would write a prayer of my own composing and use it in the morning as soon as I was out of bed: which I did, though I could then scarcely join my letters, I had learnt so little a time to write. The prayer I wrote was something after this manner: "Lord, thou commandest the Israelites to offer a morning sacrifice, so I offer up the sacrifice of prayer, and desire to be preserved this day." The use of this prayer for a little while gave me some ease. I soon quite left my prayer books, and used to write prayers according to my several occasions. . . .

A little time after this, several persons spoke to me about the greatness of my memory, and praised me for it. I felt a fear of being puffed up and wrote a prayer of thanks for that gift, and desired to be enabled to use it for the Lord, and that it might be sanctified to me.

These prayers Mary used for some time, but was still troubled. She longed to use her own words "descriptive of the state I was in" but was unable to do so "not knowing that any did pray extempore."

Sometimes I kneeled down a long time and had not a word to say, which wrought great trouble in me. I had none to reveal my distress unto, or advise with; so secretly bore a great burden a long time.

One day as I was sitting at work in the parlour, one called a gentleman—came in and looking sadly, said "it was a sad day: that Prynne, Bastwick and Burton were sentenced to have their ears cut, and to be banished."¹

This news sunk deep into my mind, and strong cries were raised in me for them, and the rest of the innocent people in the nation. I was unable to sit at my work but was strongly inclined to go to a private room, which I did, and shutting the door, kneeled down and poured out my soul to the Lord in a very vehement manner. I was wonderfully melted and eased

¹ This was in 1637 when M.P. was thirteen years old. These three men were prosecuted by Archbishop Laud for writing heretical pamphlets and were sentenced by the Star Chamber to stand twice in the pillory, to have an ear cut off on each occasion, to be fined £5,000 each and to be imprisoned for life.

and felt peace and acceptance with the Lord: and that this was true prayer, which I had never before been acquainted with.

Is not this a strange sidelight upon English history? That the well-known sufferings of Prynne and his companions were used to give her first real knowledge of true prayer to this innocent Puritan maiden?

[Not long afterwards, hearing that a suspended minister, Thomas Wilson of Otham in Kent, was to preach again in his own parish] . . . I expressed a desire to go thither, but was reproved by those that had the care of my education, they saying that it was not fit to leave my parish church. I could not be easy without going, so I went. When I came there he prayed fervently (he was one called a Puritan) and with great power. Then I felt that was true prayer, and what my mind pressed after but could not come at in my own will, and had just tasted of it the time before mentioned. And now I knew that this alone was prayer, I mourned solely because I kneeled down morning after morning, and night after night, and had not a word to say. My distress was so great that I feared I should perish in the night, because I had not prayed; and I thought that by day my food would not nourish me because I could not pray. I was thus exercised a great while and could not join in the common prayer that was read in the family every night, neither could I kneel down when I came to the worship-house as I had been taught to do.

As has been said, Mary was at this time living in the family of Sir Edward Partridge, at his house somewhere in Kent, but the actual place is never stated. The mistress of his household was a certain Madam Springett—his sister, who had been left a widow in her early twenties and who, with her two sons William and Herbert, had found a home with her brother.

She was a most excellent woman [Mary writes of her, in after years], having great regard to the well-being of her children both here and hereafter; and because she might the better discharge her duty respecting them, lived a retired life and refused many good offers for a second marriage. . . . She lived a very virtuous life, constant in morning and evening prayer in private, and often with her children; and caused them to repeat what they remembered of sermons and scriptures.

But Madam Springett, in spite of her virtues, does not seem to have had much sympathy with Mary in her religious perplexities at this early date.

By constraint I went with the family [to church] in the morning but could not be kept from the Puritan preacher in the afternoon. I went through much suffering on this account, being forced to go on foot between two or three miles, and no one permitted to go with me; except sometimes a servant, out of compassion, would run after me, lest I should be frightened going alone. Though I was very young I was so zealous that all the tried reasonings and threatenings could not keep me back. In a short time I refused to hear the priest of our parish at all, but went constantly, all weathers, to the other place. In the family I used to hear the scripture read; but if I happened to go in before they had done their prayers, I would sit down though they were kneeling.

This certainly does not seem courteous or Christian behaviour from a young girl, in the family of relations who had taken her into their home. But even looking back on this period as an elderly woman Mary can only see her own point of view.

These things wrought me much trouble in the family [no wonder!] and there was none to take my part; yet at length two of the maid-servants were inclined to mind what I said against their prayers, and so refused to join them, at which the governors of the family were much disturbed, and made me the subject of their discourse in company, saying that I would pray with the spirit, and rejected godly men's prayers; that I was proud and schismatic; and that I went to those places to meet young men, and such like. At this time I suffered, not only from those persons to whose care I was committed by my parents (who both died when I was not above three years of age), but also from my companions and kindred; yet, notwithstanding, in this zeal I grew much, and sequestered myself from my former vain company, and refused playing at cards etc. I zealously kept the Sabbath, not daring to eat or be clothed with such things as occasioned much trouble, or took up much time on that day, which I believe ought to be devoted to hearing, reading and praying.

I disregarded those matches proposed to me by vain persons,

having desired of the Lord that if I married at all, it might be a man that feared Him. I had a belief, that though I then knew of none of my outward rank that was such a one, yet that the Lord would provide such a one for me.

Possessed of this belief, I regarded not their reproaches that would say to me, that no gentleman was of this way, and that I should marry some mean person or other. But they were disappointed, for the Lord touched the heart of him that was afterwards my husband, and my heart cleaved to him for the Lord's sake.

Chapter Two

MARRIAGE

“We married without a Ring”

MARY'S lover and future husband was Sir William Springett, the son of Herbert Springett¹ (1590–1622) by his wife Catherine Partridge (1599–1647)—nephew of Sir Edward Partridge, and Mary Proude's former playfellow. He had been a student at St. Catherine's Hall, Cambridge, a Puritan College, and was now studying law at the Middle Temple. It was probably through the influence of his royalist uncle, Sir Thomas Springett, that, though only twenty, he had already been knighted at Hampton Court by Charles I himself. Norman Penney says:

On leaving College he studied law at the Inns of Court in London, and in all probability lived with his uncle and guardian Sir Thomas Springett. It is more than likely that it was while under the immediate care and patronage of this Uncle that William was created a Knight by Charles I. (10 February 1641/2.)

When he heard of his former playmate's sufferings for her convictions, he dashed home and apparently married her then and there. “He was about twenty years old.” She says:

We pressed much after the knowledge of the Lord, and walked in his fear; and though both very young, were joined together in the Lord; refusing the use of a ring and such like things then used, and not denied by any that we knew of.

In spite of Madam Springett's apparent lack of sympathy with Mary's religious convictions this marriage had her warm

¹ “He was,” says Aubrey, “of the Springetts of the Broyles in Sussex.” It seems strange that none of these Springetts is included in *D.N.B.*

approval. More than that, she even chose her for a daughter-in-law.

She proposed to him his marrying me; saying, we knew one another well, having lived together since he was twelve years old and I nine. She often discoursed with him about it; saying she knew me well, and preferred me for his wife before any she knew with a great portion, if I had had none; for other reasons beside our equality in rank and years.

Nevertheless Mary brought with her a dower of £1,600 and also inherited her father's lands in Kent and Sussex. These facts are difficult to reconcile with Mary's statement above, that she knew no man of her own rank who shared her religious beliefs.

We lived together about two years and a month. . . . We scrupled many things then in use amongst those accounted honest people, viz: singing David's Psalms in metre. . . . We were also brought off from the use of bread and wine, and water baptism.

In Mary Penington's second account of her early days, written for her own grandson, Springett Penn, she gives a much fuller account of her young playfellow, lover and husband, possibly in order that his grandson might be stirred up to wish to imitate him. This is a valuable contemporary portrait of a cultivated seventeenth-century youth.

His manner and deportment were courteous and affable towards all. He was most ingenious from a very lad, carving and forming things with his knife, for tools: so industriously active that he was scarcely ever idle.

(I wish a picture existed of this clever, busy boy and the little maid opposite watching his skill.)

But when he could not employ himself abroad, in shooting at a mark with guns, pistols, crossbows or longbows; or managing his horses (all which he brought up and managed himself, teaching them courage and boldness, in charging, against the day of battle)¹ then he would fence within doors, and make cross-

¹ Sir William Springett commanded as Colonel on the Puritan side at the Battle of Edgehill.

bow strings. He would use the bow with such accuracy as if it had been his trade; casting bullets of all sorts; feathering of arrows for his carabines; pulling his watch to pieces and mending any defect in it: or taking the house clock to pieces to clean; or training himself and servants to the postures of war, by books he had for that purpose. He was also a great artist in shooting and fishing [delicious description!] and making lines; ordering baits for the purpose. He was a great lover of coursing and managed the dogs himself. . . .

When thy grandfather was between twenty and twenty-one we married without a ring; and by his desire, many of the usual, dark, formal words were left out of the ceremony. . . . When our child [John, the firstborn and only son, born 1643] was born he would not suffer the midwife to use the usual prayers; but prayed himself and gave the Lord thanks in a very sweet, melted manner, which was cause of amazement to some present. He would use no form of prayer in the house; but prayed, morning and evening, in our chamber, with me and our servants, which wrought great discontent in the family.

We boarded with his uncle, Sir Edward Partridge. He would not let the parish priest sprinkle the child; but when he was eight days old, had him carried in arms, five miles, to this Wilson before mentioned. There was great seriousness and solemnity in the doing of this thing, for we then believed it to be an ordinance of God. Notes were sent to the professing people round, more than ten miles distant, desiring them to come and seek a blessing from the Lord upon his ordinance. None of the superstitious customs were observed, as having gossips [godparents] or any person to hold the child; but his father, whom the preacher spoke to when he came, to hold, as being the fittest person to take the charge of him. It was a great cross to him, and a new thing, and cause of great amazement, to see such a very young man, in the face of such a great assembly, hold the child in his arms, and receive the charge of his education, the preacher declaring to him his duty towards the child. It is not strange that our proceedings were cause of great amazement to the people: we were the first of quality in that country that objected to the performance of that ceremony in the usual way.

Chapter Three

“THAT TERRIBLE WINTER OF 1643”

“A young Gent. of Religion and Courage”—AUBREY

THE completed little family were not left long in enjoyment of each other. The long-threatening thunder-clouds had broken at last.

When his child was about a month old, he had a commission sent him for colonel of a regiment of foot. When the fight was at Edgehill [23 October 1642] he raised, without beat of drum, eight hundred men, most of them professors and professors' sons [i.e. convinced Puritans]. There were near six score volunteers in his own company; himself also going a volunteer, taking no pay. . . . Within a few days after his regiment was raised, there was a rising, in the vale of Kent, of many thousands; to the suppressing of which, he and his new-gathered, undisciplined soldiers were commanded, from their rendezvous at Maidstone; where, it was said, the vain people of the town designed to do them an injury by gunpowder.

He, having placed his men in the best order their inexperience and the shortness of the time would permit, came to take his leave of me before he encountered the enemy. When he came, he found there was a danger of my being put out of the house, if the enemy should come so far. It was a great surprise to him to find me in such danger. What added greatly to his distress was, his being so straitened in point of time; for he had that morning received orders to march with his regiment, in company with some others, to guard a pass where it was supposed Prince Rupert intended coming over to join the risers.

How to provide for my safety and return to his regiment at the time appointed, he was at a loss; however, his affection for me, aided by a quick capacity, soon pointed out an effectual method. He sent for a stage-coach from Rochester . . . in which parish I was, and in the night carried me and my child (to whom I gave suck) and my maid-servant, to Gravesend, and there

hired a barge to take us to London. He took a solemn leave of me, never expecting to see me again in this world, and rode post to his regiment. When I came to London, the whole city was in arms. Nothing to be heard but the noise of drums and trumpets, and the clattering of arms, and crying “Arm! Arm!” for the enemy was near the city; and it proved to be the bloody fight between the King’s forces and the parliament’s, on Hounslow Heath.

Not many days after the risers being dispersed in Kent, he came to London, having behaved himself very approvedly. . . . He afterwards went with his regiment on several expeditions. . . . He was also at the fight of Newbury [20 September 1643] where he was in imminent danger; a bullet hitting him which came from so great a distance that its force was too weak to enter. He lay some nights in the open fields, having neither time nor conveniency for pitching his tent, which he had with him. Sometimes he lay in the Lord Robert’s Coach [John, Baron Robartes, 1606–85]. They had scarcity of salt, and so would not venture to eat flesh; but lived some days on candied green citron and biscuit.

In this second account of her husband, Sir William Springett, written by Mary Penington for her grandson, Springett Penn, she later amplifies this statement as follows:

He was most affectionately tender to me and the child, beyond what I had ever observed by any other, or could expect from him, his youth, gallantry and active mind considered; which created him so much other business, as one would expect would scarcely admit of him thinking so much about us; but, on the contrary, I do not remember that ever he let an opportunity slip, when absent, of acquainting me with his situation, either by letter or verbal message. He hath often wrote letters to me at the places where he baited, on purpose to send by travellers that he might meet on the road [a revealing glimpse of the infrequency of posts in those days].

When he was engaged at the fight at Newbury, after the battle was over, he gave the messenger that was sent to the parliament to acquaint them with the issue of it, a twenty-shilling piece, only just to knock at the door of my lodgings, in Blackfriars, and leave word that he saw him well after the battle was over; he had no time to send more. This message was left me between three and four in the morning; at the hearing which joyful news, the oppression seemed to roll off my spirits

and stomach, like the removal of a great stone, and the measles came almost immediately out. [Her illness has not been previously mentioned. But see Appendix I.] . . .

After being in several other engagements, he went, with his regiment, back to Kent. . . . I am not willing to let slip taking notice to thee, of his gallant and true English spirit. . . . But not long after, his own native county, Sussex, was in danger of being spoiled by the cavalier party who had taken Arundel, and fortified the town and castle. Sir William Waller commanded in chief against them, to whose assistance the associated counties were sent for; amongst others, thy grandfather's regiment was invited. He, looking upon this engagement as a particular service to his own county, with great freedom and cheerfulness went to Arundel. There they held a long siege before the town. After they had taken it, they besieged the castle, it proved a very difficult, hard task. When it was taken, thy grandfather and Colonel Morley had the management and government of the castle committed to their charge.¹

The two sieges of Arundel are among the thrilling episodes of the Civil War, but cannot be told in detail here. Yet though Sir William Springett and Morley were left in charge of the ruined town, "there, lurking unseen amongst the ruins, was an enemy more deadly to both parties than cannon ball or steel. The carrion and filth accumulated during two sieges had generated typhus. It spared neither civilian nor soldier," says a modern writer.

W. L. Hull says that Sir W. Springett "fell ill of a wound which resulted in spinal meningitis." Another account says it was the old wound he had received at Newbury that reopened. (Buell.) Mary, however, goes on to describe his disease, calling it "the Calenture."

But a few weeks after [she writes] the Disease which the soldiers that were then in the town and castle had, called the Calenture, seized on him at his quarters, at one Wade's,

¹ On 1 December 1642 the House of Lords ordered "that Mr. Morley [Captain Herbert Morley of Glynde," the "Man of greatest influence in the County"] "do return thanks from this House to Colonel Springate, and other Captains of the county of Sussex that have expressed their affection for the King and Parliament in raising of forces for the preservation of peace of the said county."

Captain Morley was also described as "a man of a nimble apprehension and vigilant spirit," who prevented the Royalist forces from overrunning the country in 1643. *Sussex*, pp. 41, 73.

near Arundel; whither he sent for me in the depth of winter¹ (hard frost and great snow), from London. To go was a great difficulty upon me, being great with child of thy mother [this part of the narrative was also written for Mary's grandson, Springett Penn] and the waters were out at Newington. Several places on the high-ways they were obliged to row in boats, and take with us all the things out of the coach: the horses were led by strings tied to their bridles. In some places both coach and horses swam. All these difficulties were so well known to the people in London, that all, but one, refused to lend us a coach. She was a widow woman, who had had a great deal of our money, and had a great respect for us. She at length was prevailed on to let me have one, though she knew she hazarded both coach and horses. I agreed to give her a great price (twelve pounds) to carry me down. It was a very tedious, trying journey to me: we were benighted, and overturned in the dark, into a hedge-trough [ditch?]. When we came to come out of it, we found we had scarcely room enough, without danger of falling into a very sharp precipice on the other side. If the coach had [over-] turned on that side, we had certainly been dashed to pieces. Our guide was the messenger from thy grandfather to me, who, riding on a white horse, was the only rule we had to follow.

When late, we coming by a garrison, the Colonel required the guard to stop the coach, and give him notice who it was; which he did. Immediately the Colonel came down, and kindly invited me to stay till morning; and, to induce me to it, said my husband was likely to mend, and begged me to consider my situation, and not hazard my life. Upon which the coachman would almost have forced me to stay and lodge in the garrison; saying that his horses would not hold out, and that they would be spoiled. To which I replied, that if that should happen, I was obliged to pay for all of them; and that I was resolved not to go out of the coach, unless obliged to it by some accident, until I came so near my husband, that I could complete the journey on foot. So he, finding me resolved, put on.

When we came to Arundel, we met a most dismal sight. The whole town was depopulated: all the windows broken by the great guns, all the shops and lower rooms converted by the

¹ Historians speak of “that terrible winter of 1643,” “the country far and wide ransacked for bread, rents unpaid, two sets of hungry soldiery in turn masters; church, cottage and mansion alike pillaged, the parson and the farmers fined.” Rev. H. D. Gordon, “History of Harting,” quoted in *Sussex*, p. 98.

soldiers into stables. [We can imagine the ruined town all too well since the war. A few years ago it would have seemed just a description of a bygone age.] So we passed through towards his quarters [i.e. her husband's: *his* to her, naturally—as if there were no other man in the world.]

When we came within a quarter of a mile of the house, the horses stood still: we knew not the reason for it, but waited whilst our guide went down to the house to get a candle and lantern. He coming back to our assistance, found one of the wheels stuck fast in the root of a tree: it was a considerable time before it was disengaged.

The guide's going to the house, caused it to be reported to my husband that I was come. He told them they were mistaken, for he knew I could not come, I was so near my time: but they affirming that it was so, he desired them to set him up in the bed, "that I may see her," said he "when she does come." It was about twelve o'clock when I arrived. As soon as I put my foot into the hall (there being a pair of stairs leading from thence into his chamber) I heard him say "Why will you lie to me? If she is come, let me see her and hear her voice," which struck me so, that I had not strength of my own to carry me upstairs, but being assisted by two, I got up. When he saw me, he in a manner sprung up, as if he would have come out of the bed, and saying "Let me embrace thee before I die. I go to thy God and my God." I found most of his officers about him, attending on him with great tokens of affection, and sorrow for the condition he was in. The purple spots came out the day before, but now were struck in; and the fever got into his head: upon which they caused him to keep in bed, having not been prevailed on before to keep it, in the daytime, since his illness (till that day) which had been five days before the spots appeared. They, seeing his great danger (for many Kentish men, both commanders and others, had died of that distemper, within a week, near his quarters), constrained him to keep his chamber, from his first seizure; but such was his active spirit and stout heart, that he knew not how to yield to confinement, and engaged to shoot birds out of the window with his cross-bow, which he continued to do till the fever took his head and the spots went in.

This of course made his condition much more serious. He became delirious, but knew his wife when she approached:

He spoke very affectionately to me, and wittily to his officers

about keeping their prisoner. . . . His breath was so very hot and scorching, that it made his lips chap. He, perceiving my lips were cool, would hardly permit me to take them off to breathe, but would often cry out, “Oh, don’t go from me.”

The doctor,¹ my own maid-servants, and his attendants, were greatly troubled at my being so much with him; thinking that thereby I endangered both my own and child’s life, by constantly drawing in his infected breath.

Extraordinary to think that medical science, even in those days, permitted such a risk! And almost more wonderful is the fact that neither Lady Springett herself nor her coming babe, the Gulielma to be, seems to have suffered serious harm either from the exposure and difficulties of the journey, or from the close confinement in this infected room. Lady Springett narrates the whole course of her husband’s illness with poignant detail. It is too long and too intimate to be quoted in full here but will be found in Appendix I. She was persuaded to rest for a short time; then, as the end approached, after a faint flicker of hope of recovery,

When I went down, I perceived a great alteration in him and sadness upon all faces about him which exceedingly shocked me. . . . “At last,” he called to me. “Come, my dear, let me kiss thee before I die,” which he did, with such eagerness as if he would have left his breath with me; and after said “Come, my dear, once more let me kiss thee, and take my leave of thee,” which he did in the same manner as before: then cried out, “Now no more, never no more,” which having said, he fell into a great agony. . . .

The doctor, my husband’s chaplain, and the chief officers that were about him . . . desired me to go from the bedside to the fire; saying my being there occasioned his great agony and that whilst I staid there, he could not die. I stamped with my foot and cried, “Die! die! must he die? I cannot go from him.” Upon which two of them gently lifted me, in their arms, from the bed to the fire, which was at a pretty great distance from the bed, and there they held me from going to him again: at

¹ A curiously modern sidelight is recorded in the fact that at this time Chillingworth at a neighbouring town had a sore throat “like to choak him,” and sent Chigwell over to Arundel “to fetch a doctor who had previously visited him, but found he had been called out of the town to attend on Sir William Springate” up at the Castle. *Sussex*, pp. 106-7.

which time I wept not, but stood silent and amazed, frozen with grief. Soon after I was brought from the bed he lay still; and when they thought his sight was gone, that he could not see me, they suffered me to go to the bedside. I looked on him and saw the most amiable, pleasant countenance I ever beheld; smiling like an infant, when (as the saying is) they see angels. He lay about an hour in this position. Towards sunset he turned quickly about and called a kinsman of his, saying, "Come, Anthony, come quickly." At which very instant he rode into the yard, being come many miles to see him. Soon after this he departed, it being in the Twelfth Month [February]. As soon as the breath left him they took me into another chamber, and suffered me no more to see him, lest the fright should prove of bad consequence in my present condition. I now got the relief of tears.

Even after the lapse of three centuries this death-bed scene makes almost unbearably painful reading. Its poignancy is enhanced by the thought of all the other wives and mothers who doubtless underwent rather similar experiences during these years of civil war. They, however, were not gifted with Lady Springett's power of expressing sorrow and agony in words. The restrained character of her manuscript, her clear, simple English and direct narrative style speak well for her previous education. She never mentions any school or teachers. It is surely important to know that a Puritan maiden, brought up in a quiet English country home in the 1630's, had somehow attained to this power of expressing her thoughts and detailing the course of events in this clear, forcible language.

Mabel Brailsford, in *The Making of William Penn*, notices with appreciation Mary Springett's "delightful literary gift." Her diary is indeed one of the "contemporary impressions" which, as G. M. Trevelyan says in *English Social History*, "have by the passage of years become historical documents of priceless value."

Probably to avoid contagion from the fever the funeral had to be the day after Sir William Springett's death.

The next morning early he was put into a coffin and carried away privately, in his own ammunition waggon, to Ringmere, the parish in which he was born, and where some of his ancestors lay.

By his wife's wish the funeral was exceedingly simple, “the body was accompanied only by his own officers and soldiers.” His monument and bust in Ringmer church may still be seen, with a long inscription stating that his death took place at Arundel, 3 February 1643, when he was twenty-three years of age. “His wife, in testimony of her dear affection to him hath erected this monument to his memory.” (See Frontispiece.)

After the funeral, when the will was opened after Lady Springett's return to London, it was found that Sir William had died more than £2,000 in debt,

most of it contracted to maintain the war. £300 went to the Irish business; five to the Guildhall; a large sum for the purchase of all waggons, tents, furniture and other accommodations for him in several engagements; besides going out a volunteer, and keeping a table, at Arundel, for all those of their own company that were volunteers. He had expended such large sums in these concerns that, with the rest, my portion was spent (which was £1600) . . . when he died, he had but £12 in his trunk; and many large sums were due at his headquarters at Arundel . . . such as smiths' bills, provision bills for the horses that attended his person and carriages; wages to his grooms, waggoners, and such like, that attended him in the army, having pay for none of them.

These are all valuable sidelights on the sacrifices demanded and willingly given by the Puritan officers.¹

To meet the expenses, he had mortgaged various farms and lands, and had among other things given one tenant—a certain Captain Courtrop—permission to cut down valuable timber unless five hundred and sixty-odd pounds were paid to him.

This became payable within a year after his death; and those that understood things of this kind, thought there was a necessity for its being paid. All that I then had in the world to pay

¹ Sir William Springate spent his whole fortune in his strenuous efforts to raise troops of horse at the beginning of the Civil War. *Sussex*, p. 34.

In a small country church at Rock in Northumberland, a tablet is erected to a Cavalier hero, Colonel Salkeld, who in this same seventeenth century served his King “with difficult, dangerous and expensive loyalty.”

with was about £200, with which I paid Captain Courtrop in part, to prevent him from destroying the trees.

Evidently the young widow was anxious to preserve her children's inheritance for them. Strangely enough she never mentions her little son John, whose death must have happened during these years. Neither does she mention the actual birth of the babe who arrived safely soon after her father's death, in February 1644¹ and who was named, after both her parents, Gulielma Maria Posthuma Springett.

But she does mention that during her pregnancy she thought much of the rite of baptism.

When he was taken from me I was with child of my dear daughter, Gulielma Maria Springett. It was often with me that I should not be able to consent to the thing being done to my child, which I saw no fruit of, and knew to be but a custom which men were engaged in by tradition. . . . This was often in my mind and I resolved that it should not be done to my child. When I was delivered of her, I refused to have her sprinkled, which brought great reproach upon me; so I became a by-word and a hissing among the people of my own rank in the world; and a strange thing it was thought to be, among my relations and acquaintance. Such as were esteemed able ministers (and I formerly delighted to hear) were sent to persuade me, but I could not consent and be clear. My answer to them was: "He that doubteth is damned."

After some time [she continues] I waded through this difficulty, but soon after I unhappily went from the simplicity into notions and changed my ways often.

So there followed a period of spiritual dryness, the reaction doubtless from all she had gone through.

I was weary of prayers and such like exercises, finding no peace therefrom; nor could I lift up my hands without doubting, nor call God father.

After having been devoted to religious observances she now loathed whatever profession anyone made, and thought the professors of every sort worse than the profane, they boasted so much of what I knew they had not attained to.

¹ Anyhow, not later than 23 February 1644. See p. 196.

For a time she sought relief in a life of dissipation.

I thought nothing about religion, but minded recreations as they are called, and ran into many excesses and vanities; as foolish mirth, carding, dancing, singing and frequenting of music meetings; and made many vain visits at jovial eatings and drinkings. . . . I also frequented other places of pleasure where vain people resorted to show themselves, and to see others in the like excess of apparel, riding about from place to place in the airy mind. But in the midst of all this my heart was constantly sad . . . and after a pretty long indulgence in such follies, I retired for several days, and was in great trouble and anguish. . . . In this restless, distressed state, I often retired into the country, without any company but my daughter and her maid.

Chapter Four

WIDOWHOOD

“The Child of Dangers and Agonies”—BRAILSFORD

“**I** RETIRED into the country without any company but my daughter and her maid.”

With this sentence in her mother's narrative, here at last our heroine, Gulielma Maria Posthuma¹ Springett, appears upon the scene.

She is no longer an unconscious babe but has grown into a little girl, doubtless deeply interested in what went on around her. What did she think, one wonders, of her poor mother's religious vagaries? At one time set upon the strictest pious observances, at another flinging herself into a whirl of dissipation at “the Protector's Court, then entering into its phase of nearly Restoration gaiety.”²

The wide-eyed child, who says no word, surely took in something of this strange clash of moods, since out of these varied experiences she evolved a harmony of soul that surrounded her, as with an atmosphere of music, through all the joys and sorrows of her after life.

“Gulielma”—the ancient letters and diaries still seem to linger lovingly on the syllables, as if they evoked an unforgettable memory of beauty, purity and charm. And this is all the more noteworthy because, for many years, Gulielma Springett was the only one of the early Friends who had never been baptised. George Fox, his followers the Valiant Sixty, her mother, and William Penn himself, having been “convinced” of Quakerism in adult life, must all have been

¹ This name appears in the inscription on her father's tomb, but seems to have been dropped later.

² *Penn*, by Bonamy Dobrée, p. 44.

“sprinkled” in infancy. Gulielma alone among them bore her silent, radiant testimony to the efficacy of the One Baptism, “with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

A precious glimpse of Gulielma in her early childhood has been preserved, from the pen of one of her first playmates, Thomas Ellwood. He was destined to be through all the rest of her life her faithful lover. Doubtless, at one period, he may have hoped to become her husband, though he never says this in so many words. His journal shows how selflessly and silently he relinquished his hopes as soon as “he for whom she was reserved” came into their lives. But in their babyhood, at least, Thomas Ellwood had her all to himself. Those early memories could never be erased from his faithful heart. In 1641 he writes:

In my very infancy, when I was but two Years old I was carried to London. For the Civil War between King and Parliament breaking then forth, my Father, who favoured the Parliament side, though he took not Arms, not holding himself safe at his Country Habitation [at Crowell in Oxfordshire] which lay too near some Garrisons of the Kings, betook himself to London, that City then holding for the Parliament. There was I bred up, though not without much difficulty, the City Air not agreeing with my tender Constitution, and there continued till Oxford was surrendered, and the war, in appearance ended.

In this time, my Parents contracted an acquaintance and intimate Friendship with the Lady Springett, who being then the Widow of Sir William Springett, who died in the Parliament Service, was afterwards the Wife of Isaac Penington, eldest son of Alderman Penington of London.

And this Friendship devolving from the Parents to the Children, I became an early and particular Play-fellow to her daughter Gulielma; being admitted, as such, to ride with her in her little Coach, drawn by her Footman about Lincoln's Inn Fields.

Is this “little Coach” for a child, drawn by a footman, one of the earliest instances known of something like a perambulator?

Lady Springett's circumstances must have improved, since she was able to give her little daughter both a maid (a nurse, probably) and a footman for her own use.

Anyhow they were living in London still, for part of the year, somewhere not far from Lincoln's Inn Fields; and with "them also lived Madam Springett" who had formerly kept house for Sir Edward Partridge in Kent. She, as Sir William's mother, Lady Springett's mother-in-law and Gulielma's grandmother, was doubtless a very important personage in the household. This is the best place, perhaps, to describe Madam Springett in detail, as her daughter-in-law has drawn her portrait in very clear lines. She, it will be remembered, had had much to do with bringing about the marriage between her son and Mary Proude and doubtless loved their little daughter all the more in consequence.

She lived to see thy dear Mother 3 or 4 years old [Mary writes to her grandson], was exceeding fond of her and much delighted to see her increasing wisdom. I lived in the house with her, from nine years of age till after I was married to her son. After he died, she came and lived with me, and died at my house [1647].

In all which time I do not remember ever to have seen or heard one immodest, indiscreet or evil word or action by or from her. She spent her time very ingeniously, and in acts of bounty; bestowing great part of her fortune upon the poor, in physic and surgery. She had about £240 a year. She kept a brace of geldings, a man and a maid; and boarded at her only brother's, Sir Edward Partridge's. She kept several poor women employed in summer, simpling for her; and in winter procuring for her such things as she wanted in surgery, physic, and sore eyes. She had excellent judgment in all these, and admirable success; which made her famous, and sought unto out of several counties, by persons of the first rank, as well as those of other classes. She daily employed her servants in making oils, salves, balsams, drawing of spirits, distilling of waters, making syrups and conserves, lozenges and pills.

Is not this a charming description of a Puritan lady? The chief omission in her accomplishments seems to be that there is no mention of any skill in needlework or embroidery. The earliest known samplers date from about this period. It would have been pleasant to think of little Gulielma being taught to embroider hers by her grandmother. But possibly Madam

Springett had no leisure for such pursuits. Her skill lay in more important matters. Bush says, in his *Early Seventeenth Century Literature*, "In addition to supervising her servants, her family, and any girls who might be committed to her charge [as Mary Proude herself had been], a Lady of the Manor was likely to combine the functions of estate bailiff, Lady Bountiful, and Mrs. Grundy, and 'skill in chirurgery'."

She was so famous for taking off spots and cataracts from the eyes [continues Mary] that Stephens, the great oculist, sent many to her, when the case was difficult, and likely to take up more time to perfect the cure than he could well spare. She cured, to my knowledge, many desperate burns and cuts, and dangerous sores that came by them, and broken limbs; also, many of the king's evil, after having taken out several bones. [A curious detail.]

A child's head was so burnt, that its skull was like a coal; she brought it to have skin and hair, and invented a thin pan of beaten silver, covered with bladder, to preserve the head in case of a knock or a fall. Some people have come some hundreds of miles to her, and have lodged at a neighbouring village, sometimes a quarter of a year, from their families. Perhaps she would have twenty patients of a morning to administer to. I have heard her say, she spent half her income after this sort; and never received a penny for anything of that kind, but often returned valuable presents. To her patients that were in good circumstances, she would give a note of what things they should buy and bring to her, and then she made up the medicines. Her man spent great part of his time in writing directions, etc.

As to profession of her religion, since the wars in the latter part of her time, she was called a Puritan; but lately an Independent, and kept an Independent preacher in the house, and gave liberty for people to come twice a week to hear him preach. Every Seventh-day all her family must leave all their occasions, and assemble to hear this man preach to, and pray for them, by way of preparation for the morrow. She was a most tender and affectionate mother to thy grandfather [Gulielma's father] and always showed great kindness to me. . . .

"Madam Springett" was only in her early forties during Gulielma's childhood. Hers must have been a healing, calming influence during the little girl's first years. Perhaps this was needed, for her mother's alternations of gaiety and deep reli-

gious depression were going on all this time. The repeated accounts of them would become almost monotonous, were it not that the true history of a soul's pilgrimage can never be dull. Every now and then, however, comes a glimpse into the outside world for which the reader is grateful. As this, for instance:

One day, as I was going through London, from a country-house [Lady Springett writes: So they did live in the Country part of the year, and were not always in London] I could not pass through the crowd, it being the day the Lord Mayor was sworn: I was obliged to go into a house till it was over. I, being burdened with the vanity of their show, said to a professor that stood by me: "What benefit have we from all this bloodshed and Charles being kept out of the nation, seeing all these follies are again allowed?" He answered: "None that he knew of except the enjoyment of true religion." I replied "that it is a benefit to you that have a religion to be protected in the exercise of, but it is none to me."

For the most part, however, Lady Springett recalls her "darkness and distress about religion," though she remembers that

In the most confused disquieted estate I ever knew, even when I had no religion that I could call true [she yet always] retired and waited upon the Lord, to see what the day would bring forth, if I wanted to hire a servant or remove to any place. . . . O, the distress I felt at this time! Having never dared to kneel down to pray for years, because I could not in truth call God father, and dared not mock or be formal in the thing.

She was evidently in a highly nervous state, and began to have extraordinarily vivid dreams. In one of these she thought someone said to her

"Christ is come indeed, and is in the next room; and with Him, is the bride, the Lamb's wife." At this my heart secretly leaped within me, and I was ready to go and express my love to Him, and joy at His coming; but something within me bade me not to be hasty, but patiently, coolly, softly, and soberly go into the next room which I did. . . . So I stood still at a great distance, at the lower end of the hall, and Christ was at the upper end, whose appearance was that of a fresh, lovely youth,

clad in gray cloth, very plain and neat (at this time I had never heard of the Quakers or their habit), of a sweet, affable and courteous carriage. . . . After a little while it was said: "The Lamb's wife is also come," at which I beheld a beautiful young woman, slender, modest and grave, in plain garments, becoming and graceful. Her image was fully answering his, as a brother and sister. After I had beheld all this, and joyed in it, I spoke to Thomas Zachary (whom I then knew to be a seeker after the Lord, though tossed, like myself, in the many ways, yet pressing after life) saying: "Since Christ is come indeed and few know it . . . let us take the King's House at Greenwich and let us dwell with and enjoy Him there, from those that look for Him and cannot find Him." Without receiving any reply, I awoke.

Was this dream a prevision of coming events, akin to George Fox's sight on Pendle Hill of the "people in white raiment, living by a river coming to the Lord"?¹ Without knowing the date of the dream it is difficult to say. Certainly Thomas Zachary was convinced of Quakerism in 1654 at a meeting at the Bull and Mouth in London, and the Quakers had a place of meeting in "The King's House at Greenwich" from about 1658 until the Restoration.

Other dreams were more alarming. From one of these Lady Springett awoke in such terror that, she says,

my daughter's servant, who was in the room, not gone to bed, came to my bedside to know what was the matter with me. I trembled a long time after, yet knew not what to turn to.

This happened in the "retired country place" to which Lady Springett had gone, taking her daughter and the nurse with her. It is impossible not to wonder what effect all this religious emotion in her mother had on the little girl, but of that there is no record, only it is to be feared the careful, skilful, healing grandmother, Madam Springett, was no longer at hand to give succour. She died in 1647, aged forty-eight.

But other, better, more permanent help was at hand. Lady Springett was not the only distressed Seeker. Somewhere about this time she became acquainted with a man seven years

her senior who was described later as “the Long-Mournful and Sorely-Distressed Isaac Penington whom the Lord in his tender mercy at length visited and relieved, by the Ministry of that despised People called Quakers.”

My love was drawn to him [Mary Springett says] because I found he was sick and weary of all appearances [of formal religion]. My heart became united to him, and I desired to be made serviceable to him in his disconsolate condition; for he was as one alone and miserable in this world. I gave up much to be a companion to him in his sorrowing state.

So the two distressed Seekers drew together, when Gulielma was ten years old. They were married on 13 May 1654 in the Church of St. Margaret's, Westminster.

With Mary safe in her earthly haven, though still unsatisfied in soul, it is time to turn to the history of her husband and fellow-Seeker, Isaac Penington.

BOOK TWO

ISAAC

“A Man of an acute wit and of great endowments”

—W. SEWEL

Unspecified extracts in Book Two are taken from
Experiences in the Life of Mary Penington

Chapter One

THE ALDERMAN'S SON

“Long-Mournful & Sorely Distressed”

ISAAC PENINGTON (1616–79)¹ was the eldest son of Alderman Sir Isaac Penington, Knight (1587–1661), who was in 1640 High Sheriff and M.P. for London, and in 1642 Lord Mayor and Lord Lieutenant of the Tower. In the latter capacity he attended Archbishop Laud to the scaffold.² He “was a violent Republican and Presbyterian, and presented the famous ‘Root and Branch’ petition for the abolition of all Bishops.” He was also a member of the High Court of Justice which tried King Charles, though his signature was not affixed to the warrant for his execution, and in 1649 he was made one of the Council of State.

[All these facts, naturally,] made him a marked man at the Restoration. [He was attainted for treason with the other regicides.] His property was sequestrated; imprisonment in the Tower hastened his death.³

He was evidently a man of wealth and standing in the City of London and also possessed of property in the country, grants of land in Buckinghamshire and Norfolk given him as reward for his services to the Commonwealth, and an “ancestral family mansion at Chigwell in Essex.”

His son, Isaac the younger, had evidently inherited an excellent position in society, but this held no charm for him. His

¹ Isaac Penington is one of the most important of the early Quakers. He has left voluminous writings behind him. But as he enters into this narrative through his marriage with Mary Springett, which made him Gulielma's step-father, I have described himself and his history so far as possible in his wife's words rather than his own.

² *D.N.B.*

³ Robinson's *Penn and the Penn Country*.

whole mind was already turned to the question of religion. He was as truly a representative of the Commonwealth Seekers in the metropolis as his future wife, Mary Proude, had been, a few years earlier, of the Puritans living in country districts. How the two troubled souls first drew together is not known. It has been suggested that possibly in her days of worldliness and dissipation, after the death of her first husband, Isaac Penington and Mary Springett may have met casually in "fashionable society in London, and that the two seeking spirits may have discerned each other under the veneer of gaiety." Or, as Isaac was for a time an Independent, and Mary's mother-in-law was one also, religion may have served as an introduction. *D.N.B.* merely states: "For a short time Isaac Penington joined the Independents, but while still unsettled made the acquaintance of Lady Springett."

However this may have been, his future stepson-in-law, William Penn, says in his *Testimony* to Isaac (after the latter's death many years later):

He was well descended as to his worldly parentage, and born heir to a fair inheritance; his education was suitable to his quality among men, having all the advantages the schools and universities of his own country could give him, joined with the conversation of some of the knowingest and considerablest men of his own time.

Among these may be mentioned Milton and Locke. Milton had been a friend of his father, the Alderman, also, and the younger Isaac may have known him at Cambridge, for he, Isaac, matriculated as a fellow-commoner at St. Catherine's Hall, 1 April 1637. (As did William Springett a few months later.)

He was a man quick in apprehension [continues Penn's *Testimony*], fruitful in conception, and of a lively wit and intelligence, all endowed with an extraordinary mildness, that, as other men are wont to show their pregnancy by sharpness, he manifested his with an engaging sweetness.

His father's station in publick business gave him pretence enough to share of the world's greatness but he became the wonder of his kindred and familiars for his awful life, and serious and frequent retirements, declining all company that might

interrupt his meditations; and by giving himself over to a life of mourning and meditation, he was as unpleasant to them, as the world was to him.

His inward exercises and enjoyments being of a very peculiar nature, made him take little comfort in any of the religious societies then known to him. He was as one alone. . . .¹ [And this in spite of the hundreds of sects springing up all round him in those Commonwealth days.] This drew reproach upon him from the worldly professors; particularly the clergy (that common eclipse between God and the Souls of his people).

These “professors,” be it remembered, were of course not Anglicans but high-and-dry Puritans, the constant adversaries of George Fox.

Isaac says himself:

I was acquainted with a spring of life from my childhood which enlightened me in my tender years, [his wife writes from “thy very babish days”] and pointed my heart towards the Lord, begetting true sense in me, and faith and hope and love and humility, and meekness . . . so that I was indeed a wonder to some that knew me, because of the savour and life of religion that dwelt in my heart and appeared in my conversation. . . . Indeed I did not look to have been so broken, shattered and distressed as I afterwards was, and could by no means understand the meaning thereof. . . . When I was broken and dashed to pieces in my religion I was in a congregational way; but soon after parted with them, yet in great love, relating how I could not hold up an outward form of that which I inwardly wanted, having lost my God, my Christ, my faith, my knowledge, my life, my all. And so we parted very lovingly, I wishing them well, even the promise of that God whom I wanted; promising to return to them again, if ever I met with that which my soul wanted and had clearness in the Lord so to do. In this great trouble and grief . . . I spent many years and fell into great weakness of body. . . .

Such a gentle severance from those who differed from him is unusual at this period, and characteristic of the man.

¹ Penn also uses this phrase to describe himself in childhood.

Chapter Two

SEEKING AND FINDING

“Love is the beautiful Thing”—I. PENINGTON

IT was small wonder that the two troubled souls drew together. Isaac has not left an account of their meeting and marriage, but fortunately Mary Springett has recorded it her own words:

In the situation I mentioned [she writes], of being wearied in seeking and not finding, I married my dear husband, Isaac Penington. My love was drawn towards him, because I found he saw the deceit of all notions, and lay as one that refused to be comforted by any appearance of religion, until He came to his Temple “who is truth and no lie.” All things that appeared to be religion and were not so, were very manifest to him; so that, till then, he was sick and weary of all appearances.

A very similar spiritual pilgrimage to that of George Fox a few years earlier.

My heart became united to him, and I desired to be made serviceable to him in his disconsolate condition: for he was as one alone and miserable in this world. I gave up much to be a companion to him in his suffering state.

The reader longs to know what lies behind these simple words. And for the first few years of their wedded life the two distressed souls just went on seeking painfully, although together, for fuller light, after their marriage in 1654.

During this time they heard rumours of “a new People called Quakers,” but Mary “resolved not to enquire of them, nor what principles they held.”

For a year or more after I heard of them in the north [she writes] I heard nothing of their way, except that they used thee

and thou; I saw a book written in the plain language by George Fox.

“In the north”: this is illuminating, remembering how the “Valiant Sixty” had started out from Cumberland and Westmorland, “the Galilee of Quakerism,” only two years before.

I remember that I thought it very ridiculous, so minded neither the people nor the book, except it was to scoff at them and it.

Nevertheless,

Though I thus despised this people, I had sometimes a desire to go to one of their meetings, if I could, unknown, and to hear them pray, for I was quite weary of doctrines; but I believed if I was with them when they prayed, I should be able to feel whether they were of the Lord or not.

Curiously interesting, is it not, to see how Mary’s touchstone in childhood concerning the reality of prayer remained with her through life? Could she possibly have found a better one?

I endeavoured to stifle this desire, not knowing how to get to one of their meetings unknown; and if it should be known, I thought it would be reported that I was one of them. One day as my husband and I were walking in a park, a man, that for a little time had frequented the Quakers’ meetings, saw us as he rode by, in our gay, vain apparel.

Then it is a mistake, evidently, to think of the wealthy Puritans at that date as clad in sober garments? Or had the Peningtons thrown them off with their allegiance to their faith? Notice that Mary says “*our* gay, vain apparel,” so Isaac must also have been in a “worldly” costume, whatever the sect he may have outwardly joined.

He [the stranger] cried out to us against our pride, etc. at which I scoffed, and said he was a public preacher indeed, who preached in the highways. He turned back again, saying he had a love for my husband, seeing grace in his looks.

All through his life people noticed Isaac Penington’s charm of countenance and manner. He must have possessed indeed “a

sweet attractive kind of grace, the lineaments of Gospel looks." Even in old age this charm continued, and is especially evident in the testimonies written by his friends after his death.

This unknown stranger "drew nigh to the pales," the railings separating the preacher on horseback in the public highway from the Peningtons in the park,

1659423

and spoke of the light and grace which had appeared to all men. My husband and he engaged in discourse. The man of the house coming up, invited the stranger in; he was but young and my husband too hard for him in the fleshly wisdom. [As previously stated, Penington had been educated at St. Catherine's Hall, Cambridge.] He told my husband he would bring a man to him next day, that should answer all his questions, or objections, who, as I afterwards understood, was George Fox. He came again the next day, and left word that the friend he intended to bring could not well come; but some others, he believed, would be with us about the second hour. At which time came Thomas Curtis and William Simpson.

Faithful Thomas Curtis, the woollen-draper of Reading. So he appears in this story again, and is again being used to bring others to the light, who were afterwards to become much more famous than himself in Quaker annals. Many modern Friends know well the names of Loveday Hambly, the Quaker Saint of Cornwall, and of Isaac Penington, the prisoner of Aylesbury, but few of them know anything about worthy Thomas Curtis who yet was the original means of opening their hearts to the truth. He and his wife had been convinced two or three years previously. They had already known what the Penington couple were soon to learn, how to sacrifice outward show to "Truth."

Alexander Parker, writing from Reading in 1655, says: "Captain Curtis of that place and his wife . . . have formerly lived very high and very rich in apparel, but are stripped of all; he hath ripped off his gold buttons, and his wife hath stripped off all her jewels and rich attire." (A.R.B., p. 239.)

As for William Sympson (1627-70/1), Penn describes him as one "of the first and most eminent of the early Quakers." He was convinced about 1653, so he was also a comparatively recent convert himself.

Nevertheless, in spite of their simple dress, “the solemn and weighty carriage” of himself and his companion “struck a dread” over Mary Penington, as they all gathered to hear the message the strangers had to deliver. She had been impressed, in a way, by the rider on horseback who had met them in the park the previous day, and though she thought him

weak in managing the arguments he endeavoured to support, yet many scriptures which he mentioned stuck with me weightily. They were such as showed me the vanity of many practices I was in: which made me very serious and soberly inclined to hear what these men had to say.

Isaac’s opinion had been much the same:

How ridiculous was their manner of coming forth and appearance to the eye of man. I was hardly able to forbear disdaining them.

Again, he thought them

a poor weak silly contemptible generation who had some smatterings of truth in them.

Mary continues:

Their solid and weighty carriage struck a dread over me. I now knew that they came in the power and authority of the Lord to visit us, and that the Lord was with them. All in the room were sensible of the Lord’s power manifest in them.

Thomas Curtis repeated this scripture: “He that will know my doctrine, must do my commands.” Immediately it arose to my mind, that if I would know whether that was truth which they had spoken or not, I must do what I knew to be the Lord’s will . . . this wrought mightily in me. Things which I had slighted much, now seemed to have power over me. . . . How often did this run through my mind “Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life?” “It is true I am undone if I come not to thee, but I cannot come unless I leave that which cleaveth close to me, and I cannot part with it.”

I saw the Lord would be just in casting me off and not giving me life; for I would not come from my beloved lusts, to Him, for life. Oh! the pain I felt still.

A little time after the Friends’ visit . . . one night on my bed it was said unto me: “Be not hasty to join these people called Quakers.”

This part of Mary Penington's narrative is quite innocent of dates. Other sources relate that in 1656 Isaac Penington attended a meeting at Reading. At the end of January 1657-8 Richard Hubberthorne had a general meeting among Friends in Buckinghamshire and wrote: "Isaac Penington and his wife grow in the knowledge of the truth, they were there and others of his family."

And on Whit Sunday, 1658, Isaac and Mary heard George Fox preach at "a great meetinge" at John Crook's house, where, Fox writes (*Camb. Jnl.*, i, 181), "People generally" were "convinct of the Lords truth." Shortly after, the two Peningtons and Gulielma publicly joined the people whom Isaac says "his understanding and reason had formerly counted contemptible." (*D.N.B.*) Hearing this news, Alderman Penington was indignant and wrote harshly to his son, but the latter was immovable.

In 1658 he and his wife settled at the Grange, Chalfont St. Peter, a house which had been a wedding present to him from the Alderman four years previously. Before this they had lived at Datchet and at Caversham, near Reading. Mary's narrative continues:

I never had peace from a sore exercise for many months, [costing the troubled pilgrim] many tears, doleful nights and days; not now disputing against the doctrine preached by the Friends, but exercised against taking up the cross to the language, fashions, customs, titles, honor, and esteem in the world.

My relations made this cross very heavy . . . but at length I received strength to attend the meetings of these despised people which I never intended to meddle with, but found truly of the Lord and my heart owned them. I longed to be one of them and minded not the cost or pain: but judged it would be well worth my utmost cost and pain to witness such a change as I saw in them, such power over their corruptions. I had heard it objected against them, that they wrought not miracles; but I said that they did great miracles, in that they turned them that were in the world and the fellowship of it, from all such things. Thus, by taking up the cross, I received strength against many other things which I had thought it impossible to deny; but many tears did I shed, and bitterness of soul did I experience, before I came thither. . . .

Chapter Three

ASSURANCE

“Swimming in the Life”

EVIDENTLY it was the large meeting at John Crook's house in Bedfordshire, at Whitsuntide, 1658, that finally determined Isaac and Mary Penington to cast in their lot with the formerly despised Quakers. George Fox was present, and his preaching and personality doubtless had much to do with their conviction. Whitsuntide, the Feast of the Gift of the Spirit, was once more, in the South of England as, in 1652, it had been in the North, specially marked in Quaker annals.¹

Isaac's account of his experience, though well known, is too eloquent not to be quoted here in part, though it deserves to be read as a whole:

Some may desire to know what I have at last met with. [Remember how many years he had been a seeker.] I answer I have met with the Seed [the divine Life of Christ in the Soul], understand that word and thou wilt be satisfied and enquire no further. I have met with my God; I have met with my Saviour; and He has not been present with me without His salvation, but I have felt the healings drop upon my soul from under His wings. . . .

“I have met with the true spirit of prayer and supplication, wherein the Lord is prevailed with, and which draws from Him whatever the condition needs, the soul always looking up to Him in the will, and in the time and way which is acceptable with Him.

“I have met with the true peace, the true righteousness, the true holiness, the true rest of the soul, the everlasting habitation which the redeemed dwell in. And I know these to be true in

¹ See *Beginnings* and *Quaker Saints*.

Him that is true, and am capable of no doubt, dispute or reasoning in my mind about them; it abiding there where it hath received the full assurance and satisfaction. And also I know very well and distinctly in spirit where the doubts and disputes are, and where the certainty and full assurance is, and, in the tender mercy of the Lord am preserved out of the one, and in the other."

Mary's joy was no whit behind her husband's, though, woman-like, it was not until she was present at a meeting held in her own house that she felt it to the full.

But oh! the joy that filled my soul [she writes] in the first meeting ever held in our house at Chalfont. To this day I have a fresh remembrance of it. It was then the Lord enabled me to worship Him in that which was undoubtedly his own, and give up my whole strength, yea, to swim in the life which overcame me that day. Oh! long had I desired to worship Him with acceptance, and lift up my hands without doubting, which I witnessed that day in that assembly. I acknowledged his great mercy and wonderful kindness; for I could say, "this is it which I have longed and waited for, and feared I never should have experienced." Many trials have I been exercised with since, [yes indeed, her delicate husband's long captive years in his repeated imprisonments] but they were all from the Lord, who strengthened my life in them.

Truly a wonderful testimony this, of "swimming in the life" of joy and peace. The candour of the preceding account of the writer's life-long battling with all the waves and billows that went over her, makes it the more emphatic.

But though she was now "swimming" in inward peace she had to struggle against outward storms. These she describes with equal candour—enabling the reader to understand a little more clearly what the cost must have been of joining the Quakers at this time. In the North Country, though Margaret Fell had plenty of similar trials to face, yet she also had the comradeship of other fellow-pilgrims, of all ranks, who had been convinced about the same time, whereas the Penington husband and wife in Buckinghamshire had for a while to bear the brunt of the storm almost alone.

Mary Penington's record continues:

After my dear husband and I had received the truth of God's faithful servants, to the light and grace in the heart, we became obedient to the heavenly voice, receiving the truth in the love of it, and took up the cross to the customs, language, friendships, titles, and honors of this world; and endured, patiently, despisings, reproaches, cruel mockings, and scorings, from relations, acquaintances and neighbours; those of our own rank, and those below us, nay, even our own servants. To every class we were a by-word; they would wag the head at us, accounting us fools, mad and bewitched.

In the same way Judge Fell's neighbours informed him that his wife Margaret had been bewitched by "the man in the white hat."¹

As such, they stoned, abused, and imprisoned us, at several towns and meetings where we went. This not being enough to prove us . . . it pleased the Lord to try us by the loss of our estate, which was wrongfully withheld from us by our own relations suing us unrighteously. Our own tenants withheld what the law gave, and put us into the Court of Chancery, because we could not swear. Our relations also taking that advantage, we were put out of our dwelling-house, in an injurious, unrighteous manner. Thus we were stripped of my husband's estate and a great part of mine.

So the beloved home, the Grange, at Chalfont² St. Peter had ultimately to be abandoned. Before that happened, however, as the house was the family home of the Peningtons, and, as has been said, the Alderman's wedding gift to Isaac and Mary, they were allowed to remain there for several years "on sufferance."

Although their becoming Quakers had caused dissension in their own family, it had not done them harm in the neighbourhood, in these early years of the Restoration, since it had definitely cut them off from, and shown them to be opposed to, the Alderman's well-known republican sentiments. Later on, the persecution of the Quakers became much fiercer, and Isaac

¹ *Quaker Saints*, p. 169.

² "Chaffont is the local pronunciation. In after years the Grange was for a time inhabited by Judge Jeffreys." *Penn Country*, by R. Robinson.

suffered repeated and cruel imprisonments. M. Whitcomb Hess says truly¹

Whatever happened to him after he became a Quaker, he was never to doubt that all was well with him, whether at Chalfont Grange (the Penington mansion he inherited and lost), Reading Gaol, or Woodside House; or, after 1679, the little Quaker burial ground of Jordan's field.

During these years Friends used to gather "in the house of William Russel, where sixty or seventy persons of 'inconsiderable quality' met for worship. This was at Old Jordans Farm." (Summers.) Near at hand they have gathered ever since.

M. W. Hess also mentions that the Cambridge Platonist, Henry More, wrote to "the incomparable Lady," Anne, Viscountess Conway, saying that Isaac Penington was his choice among all the writers on Quakerism: "There's none reads more like a downright good man than he."²

The following letter from Isaac Penington to his wife shows his affectionate nature. Mary seems to have gone to London with Gulielma for medical advice.

19th of First-month, 1667

My dear love, whom my heart is still with, and whose happiness and full content is my great desire and delight.

Leaving thee in so doubtful a condition, and there being such an earnestness in my mind to hear how it was with thee, it was pretty hard to me to miss of a letter from thee on the Third-day. Thomas Ellwood had one from W.P. [William Penington, not William Penn] on the Fourth-day, wherein there was very good and welcome news concerning thy health.

On Third-day night were called E.H., W.R., and G.S., not having been called at the assizes. They said the judge spake much against the Papists at the assizes, and also gave a short charge relating to the fanatics. And I heard by a Windsor friend that they were forward, and preparing to be very sharp at Windsor.

Yesterday I saw thy boy Nat at [name illegible] looking very well and fresh, if not too well; I mean, too fat. Bill and all thy children are well. Bill expects thy coming home at night. I

¹ In *The Message of Isaac Penington*, M. Whitcomb Hess.

² *Conway Letters*, Nicholson.

bid him write to thee to come home; but he said no, he would go to London to thee. I said, "If thou canst not get quiet, father will get all thy love from thee"; for he was exceedingly loving to me this morning in bed. He said, "No! no! must not get all the love from mother." My natural love makes me express these things, yet not without some fear lest I should be instrumental to draw thy mind too much into that nature which I myself want to be daily further and further drawn out of.

My dear love is to thee and to my dear Guli.

My dear, that the Lord may lead us more and more into His precious life, and under His holy power, and into the grace of, and subjection to His pure truth, that therein we may live to Him, and feel the daily change more and more into His holy image!

Thine in all dearness, truth and love,

I. P.

P.S.—Thomas Ellwood desires me to mind his love to thee and Guli Springett.

My soul hath been poured out, my dear, in prayer for thy health and ease, if the Lord might see good; and for His doing thee good by the pain wherewith thou art afflicted; and for thy growth and prosperity in His truth. I also desire of the Lord prudence and wisdom, to guide me towards my children. (Gibson MSS., ii, 45, at Friends House.)

Chapter Four

AFTERWARDS

“I think not of him without delight”—T. ELLWOOD

AFTER these critical years, during which Isaac and Mary Penington became adherents of Quakerism, their own histories pass more into the background of this story, though they are always notable figures there. Yet now they appear as home-makers, and in their family relationships, rather than absorbed as heretofore in their own spiritual experiences. In order not to interrupt this narrative later on, it seems well to follow the course of Isaac's life in outline at this point, and to mention, in passing, the six imprisonments he suffered, in Aylesbury Gaol and at Reading. These imprisonments, varying in length from one month to three years, were for such offences as “Worshipping God in his own House,” “accompanying Body of deceased Friend to the Grave,” and “Refusing to say ‘My Lord’ to the Earl of Bridgwater.” (Hess.) Aylesbury, although it was “so decayed that it was scarcely fit for a dog-house,” and although his cell there had no fireplace and was so ruinous that it often let in the rain, he, the son of a Parliament grandee and in delicate health, could yet describe it as to him “a place of pleasure and delight.” Isaac Penington, the Quaker, was a spiritual kinsman of Samuel Rutherford, the persecuted Scots Minister of Anwoth, who also was able to head letters, written in his somewhat similar prison in the far North, “from Christ's Palace at Aberdeen.”

Isaac's death took place in 1679, shortly before his son-in-law William Penn set sail for his first visit to America. This brought forth a number of affectionate and discerning tributes to Isaac from those who knew him well. As many of these

describe him from knowledge gained during long years of intimacy, it will not be out of place to quote some of them here. Isaac evidently possessed the gift of making himself beloved. To read the various Testimonies written by his friends after his death is to gain a clear idea not only of their grief but also of his character and of his charm.

This is all the more valuable because the description of him on the title-page of his collected works does not accord with our modern idea of successfully introducing an author.

The Works of that Long-Mournful and Sorely-Distressed Isaac Penington, whom the Lord in his tender mercy, at length visited and relieved by the Ministry of that despised People called Quakers; and in the springings of that Light and Life and Holy Power which they had truly and faithfully testified of . . . are now published as a Thankful Testimony of the Lord to him and for the benefit of others.

“Long-Mournful” he may have been. “Sorely Distressed” he surely was—robbed of his home, driven from place to place, imprisoned six times and spending altogether five years in prison. But though his friends mention his sufferings they do not dwell on them chiefly. Here are some of the things they say of him.

He was a tender-spirited man [writes Christopher Taylor], near and dear unto my soul, as he was to many others because of his inward tender-spiritedness! [Why has this graphic adjective been allowed to fall into disuse?] . . . a man truly endowed with humility . . . when we have been together, and he would open his heart unto me, it would so answer my own life and the exercises of my own condition, that my heart would be so affected with joy that . . . [in] God’s eternal love we have often met and saluted each other. And I may say, dear Isaac Penington, thou livest indeed, and my soul liveth with thee. An entire innocent man he was, without guile in his heart; a lovely instrument in God’s hand to the turning many to righteousness, a true tender friend. . . . O dear Isaac liveth, and his life is with us, and not separated from us.

A fellow-prisoner, Robert Jones, writes:

I have had knowledge of him near twenty years, especially in

suffering; for it pleased the Lord so to order it that our lot fell together in prison several times, and I may say that it was well it was so; for being made willing by the power of God to suffer with great patience, cheerfulness, contendedness and true nobility of spirit, he was a good example to me and others. I do not remember that I ever saw him cast down or dejected in his spirit in the time of his close confinement, nor speak hardly of those that persecuted him; for he was of that temper as to love enemies and to do good to those that hated him, having received a measure of that virtue from Christ, his Master, that taught him to do so. . . . In the prison he was a help to the weak. . . . O the remembrance of that glory that did often overshadow us in the place of confinement! so that indeed the prison was made by the Lord to us (who was powerfully with us) as a pleasant palace.

Ambrose Rigge, writing from Gatton in Surrey, says:

His life was a pilgrimatory passage to eternity—a man of a retired spirit and little minded the things of this life.

Isaac himself says that from his childhood

There was something indeed then still within me (even the seed of eternity) which leavened and balanced my spirit almost continually.

But his wife, Mary Penington, who knew and loved him best of all, brings him before us more clearly still:

Ah me! he is gone! he that none exceeded in kindness in tenderness, in love inexpressible to the relation as a wife: Next to the love of Christ Jesus to my soul was his love precious and delightful to me. My bosom-one! that was as my guide and counsellor, my pleasant companion! my tender, sympathizing friend! as near to the sense of my pain, sorrow, grief and trouble as it was possible. Yet this great help and benefit is gone; and I, . . . let him go without an unadvised word of discontent, or inordinate grief. Nay, further, such was the great kindness the Lord shewed me in that hour, that my spirit ascended with him in that very moment that his soul left his body; and I saw him safe in his own mansion, and rejoiced with him, and was at that instant gladder of it, than ever I was of enjoying him in the body. . . .

This testimony to dear Isaac Penington is from the greatest loser of all that had a share in his life, Mary Penington.

Then follows the touching note:

This was written at my house, at Woodside, the 27th of the 2nd month 1680, between 12 and 1 at night, whilst I was watching with my sick child.

From all these different testimonies a clear impression is left of a gracious, kindly, tender-spirited man in late middle life. How did the stormy and distressed youth at length emerge into and become this suave elderly figure? In part this can only now be surmised, but it is valuable to try to follow his development because his early life affords a glimpse into the home life and thoughts of the seeking people, the spiritual Puritans, among whom George Fox's message found such a ready welcome. Isaac Penington, like William and Mary Springett, and many others, may be said to have been among the pre-Quaker Quakers. Although these seekers lived not in the North of England but in the South, they, and such as they, were essentially among "The People in White Raiment" waiting to be gathered whom George Fox saw in his vision on Pendle Hill.

Gulielma herself has left only a few words about her stepfather. (See Appendix III.) She is herself his best testimony. It was under his influence, and through "the sweet and dear habit of living together" for long years in his home, that she grew to womanhood, and became herself "a woman of ten thousand" as her husband, William Penn, was later to describe her.

In considering Gulielma's life as a whole, this influence of her stepfather must always be remembered. His sanity and sweetness, the wit and charm that were his especial characteristics, the balance of his mind and the serene certainty to which he had at length attained, all influenced those who shared the atmosphere of his home, whether as inmates or as visitors.

His wife, Mary, especially, who from her earlier diaries might almost have developed a kind of religious mania, ripened, thanks to his companionship, into a loving and gracious old age.



*PORTRAIT OF WILLIAM PENN
IN ARMOUR, 1666*



*INTERIOR OF KING JOHN'S FARM,
CHORLEY WOOL*

FRIENDS' BURIAL GROUND, JORDANS



Thomas Ellwood, who for many years was an inmate of his home, says of Isaac:

He was naturally furnished with a sharp and excellent wit, and that well cultivated and polished with an ingenuous and liberal education. His disposition was courteous and affable, free from pride and affectation. His ordinary discourse cheerful and pleasant, neither morose nor light, but innocently sweet and tempered with such a serious gravity, as rendered his converse both delightful and profitable.

William Penn says of his father-in-law (a wonderful testimony):

As the candle of his natural life burnt dimmer, his soul waxed stronger.

His son, John Penington, writes:

It pleased the Lord to remove him from us, and take him to himself, on the eighth day of the eighth month [October] 1679, between three and four in the morning, at one of my dear mother's farms in Kent, . . . called Goodnestone Court. They had been among their tenants in that country, and in their return spent some time here; but the day appointed for my dear father to return, he was visited with this sickness, whereof he died, having lain just a week. His body was conveyed thence (some of his relations and London friends accompanying it) to London, thence into Buckinghamshire to his own house, and so to the burying-place of friends belonging to Chalfont-meeting (called Jordans); where he was honourably buried, being accompanied by some hundreds of friends and neighbours.

And now, as Isaac takes his place in the background of Gulielma's life, the writer of the first description above, her old childish playfellow, steps into the foreground.

It was while she and the Peningtons were still living at the Grange, at Chalfont St. Peter, that they received a visit there from an old friend of Mary Penington's London days, Walter Ellwood, with his son Thomas. The latter was the little boy who in Gulielma's childhood had shared her "little carriage" or perambulator in London. Now, grown to manhood, he met his "early and particular playfellow" (as he calls her) once more. His vivid descriptions, both of her in her girl-

hood, and of the rest of the Penington household in the period passed over lightly in Mary's own records, will become our chief authority for the ensuing years.

But before taking partial leave of Isaac Penington let us recall what to many will always be his most cherished legacy, the following sentences:

All Truth is a shadow except the last—except the utmost, yet every Truth is true in its kind. It is substance in its own place, though it be but a shadow in another place (for it is but a shadow from an intenser substance;) and the shadow is a true shadow, as the substance is a true substance.

Belief in the light works patience, meekness, gentleness, tenderness and long-suffering. It will bear anything for God, anything for men's souls' sake. It will wait quietly and stilly for the carrying on of the work of God in its own soul, and for the manifestation of God's love and mercy to others. . . . It brings peace, joy and glory . . . the true peace, and certain peace.

True peace is the stillness, the stayedness, the satisfiedness of the heart in God, which floweth from and with the Spirit of Life into the soul, that is subjected to Christ.

BOOK THREE

THOMAS

“A Man of a comely Aspect”—TESTIMONY

Unspecified extracts in Book Three are taken from
The History of Thomas Ellwood, written by his own Hand
(Third edition, 1765)

Chapter One

GULIELMA'S PLAYFELLOW

“A little busy Boy”—T. ELLWOOD

THOMAS ELLWOOD, “Gentleman,” was born in 1639 at “a little Country-town called Crowell” in Oxfordshire, three miles eastward from Thame, the nearest market town. He was the son of Walter Ellwood by his wife Elizabeth Potman; both [says Thomas] well descended, but of declining Families. So that what my Father possessed (which was a pretty Estate in Lands, and more as I have heard in Monies) he received, as he had done his name Walter, from his Grandfather, Walter Gray, whose Daughter and only Child was his Mother.

“Walter Ellwood was the squire of the little village of Crowell that lies below the Chiltern escarpment not far from Thame,” Robinson says, in *Penn Country*.

When Thomas was two years old his father removed with his family for greater safety to London.

For the Civil War between King and Parliament breaking then forth, my Father, who favoured the Parliament side, though he took not Arms, not holding himself safe at his Country Habitation, which lay too near some Garrisons of the King's, betook himself to London, that City then holding for the Parliament.

Thomas must have been a delicate child, for he says he was there

bred up, though not without much difficulty, the City Air not agreeing with my tender Constitution, and there continued until Oxford was surrendered, and the War in Appearance ended.

In this Time, my Parents contracted an Acquaintance and intimate Friendship with the Lady Springett, who being then

the Widow of Sir William Springett, who died in the Parliament Service, was afterwards the Wife of Isaac Penington, eldest son of Alderman Penington of London. And this Friendship devolving from the Parents to the Children, I became an early and particular Play-fellow to her Daughter Gulielma; being admitted, as such, to ride with her in her little Coach, drawn by her Footman about Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.

This picture of Gulielma in her babyhood already quoted is repeated here to introduce Thomas Ellwood himself. Through life he was to remain her devoted lover and faithful friend. Doubtless at one time he may have dreamed of ultimately becoming her husband. But he relinquished this hope as soon as William Penn, "he for whom she was reserved," appeared on the scene. This is all part of the romance that later years were hiding. Only his faithful heart doubtless never forgot that in her babyhood at least he had once had her entirely to himself. These earliest memories could never be destroyed.

His account of his childhood continues:

Soon after the surrender of Oxford [11 May 1646] my Father returned to his estate at Crowell; which by that time he might have Need enough to look after, having spent, I suppose, the greatest part of the monies which had been left him by his Grandfather, in maintaining himself and his Family at an high Rate in London.

My elder Brother (for I had one Brother and two Sisters, all elder than myself) was, while we lived in London, boarded at a private school . . . near Barnet . . . where he had made some good proficiency in the Latin and French Tongues. But after we had left the City, and were re-settled in the Country, he was taken from that private School and sent to the Free-school at Thame in Oxfordshire. Thither also was I sent as soon as my tender age would permit, for I was indeed but young when I went [not yet seven, apparently] and yet seemed younger than I was, by reason of my little and low Stature. For it was held for some years a doubtful Point, whether I should not have proved a Dwarf. But after I was arrived to the fifteenth Year of my Age, or thereabouts, I began to shoot up, and gave not over growing till I had attained the middle Size and Stature of men. At this School, which at that Time was in a good Reputation, I profited apace.

The “Free-Grammar” school of Thame was of “a good reputation” indeed. Founded by a bequest left by John, Baron Williams, in 1560, the buildings were begun in 1574 and still stand to-day in a state of good preservation.

Anthony Wood, the historian, was among the noted men who received their education there. Thomas Ellwood may possibly have been a fellow student of his for a few weeks in the summer of 1646, as Anthony did not leave till September of that year. Thomas missed, however, the exciting events that had taken place at the school a year earlier, in 1645, when the Royalists and Parliamentarians were constantly fighting in or near Thame.

Anthony Wood, who had been sent to school at the age of twelve with his brother, to be out of the way of the fighting, saw, as it happened, a good deal of it. Of this he has left graphic accounts, especially of the

great alarme to the juvenile muses in the Vicaridge House [where he boarded with his kinsman the Vicar] particularly to A.W. when [after a free fight between the forces] “The Royalists had the best of it, and drove the Roundheads out of the town for the time. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good” comments J. M. Falkner:¹ “Some of the Parliament troopers had been quartered in the Vicarage-house and the day before ‘had been proggng for venison in Thame Park, I think, and one or two pasties of it were made and newly put in the oven before the cavaliers entered the house. But so it was that none of the said rebels were left at 11 of the clock to eat the said pasties, so their share fell among the school-boyes that were sojourners in the said house’.”

The Ellwood boys must have been sorry to have missed this feast. But, unless boys then were very different from boys now, they would surely hear glowing accounts of it on their arrival the following year.

To continue Thomas Ellwood’s narrative:

At this school . . . I profited apace, having then a natural Propensity to Learning; so that at the first reading over of my Lesson, I commonly made myself Master of it; And yet, which

¹*History of Oxfordshire*, by John Meade Falkner, p. 244.

is strange to think of, few Boys in the School wore out more Birch than I. For tho' I was never, that I remember, whipt upon the Score of not having my Lesson ready, or of not saying it well; yet being a little busy Boy, full of Spirit, of a working Head and active Hand, I could not easily conform myself to the grave and sober Rules, and, as I then thought, severe Orders of the School; but was often playing one waggish Prank or other among my Fellow-scholars, which subjected me to the Discipline of the Rod twice in a Forenoon; which yet brake no Bones.

Had I been continued at this School, and in due Time preferred to an higher, I might in likelihood have been a Scholar; for I was observed to have a Genius apt to learn. But my Father having, so soon as the Republican Government began to settle, accepted the office of a Justice of the Peace (which was no way beneficial but meerly honorary, and every way expensive) and putting himself into a Port and Course of Living agreeable thereunto; and having also removed my Brother from Thame School to Merton College in Oxford, and entred him there in the highest and most chargeable Condition of a Fellow-Commoner, he found it needful to retrench his Expenses elsewhere; the Hurt of which fell upon me.

For he therefore took me from school, to save the Charge of maintaining me there; which was somewhat like plucking green Fruit from the Tree, and laying it by before it was come to its due Ripeness, which will thenceforth shrink and wither, and loose that little Juice and Relish which it began to have.

Even so it fared with me. For being taken home when I was but young, and before I was well settled in my studies (though I had made a good progress in the Latin Tongue, and was entred in the Greek,) being left too much to myself, to ply or play with my Books as I pleased, I soon shook Hands with my Books by shaking them out of my Hands, and laying them, by degrees, quite aside, and addicted myself to such youthful Sports and Pleasures as the Place afforded and my Condition could reach unto . . . in a little Time I began to lose that little Learning I had acquired at School, and by a continued Disuse of my Books, became at length so utterly a Stranger to Learning, that I could not have read, far less have understood, a sentence in Latin. Which I was so sensible of, that I warily avoided reading to others, even in an English Book, lest, if I should meet with a Latin word, I should shame myself with mispronouncing it.

Thus I went on, taking my Swing in such Vain Courses as

were accounted harmless Recreations; entertaining my Companions and familiar Acquaintance with pleasant Discourses in our Conversations, by the meer Force of Mother-wit and natural Parts, without the Help of School Cultivation; and was accounted Good Company too. But I always sorted myself with Persons of Ingenuity, Temperance and Sobriety; for I loathed Scurrilities in Conversation, and had a natural Aversion to immoderate Drinking. So that in the time of my greatest Vanity, I was preserved from Prophaneness, and the grosser Evils of the World; which rendered me acceptable to Persons of the best Note in that Country then. I often waited on the Lord Wenman at his house Thame Park, about two Miles from Crowell where I lived; to whose Favour I held myself intituled in a two-fold Respect, both as my Mother was nearly related to his Lady, and as he had been pleased to bestow his Name upon me, when he made large Promises for me at the Font. He was a Person of great Honour and Virtue, and always gave me a kind Reception at his Table, how often soever I came. And I have cause to think I should have received from this Lord some advantageous Preferment in this world . . . had I not been, in a little Time after, called into the Service of the best and highest Lord; and thereby lost the Favour of all my Friends, Relations and Acquaintance of this World. To the Account of which most happy Exchange I hasten, and therefore willingly pass over many Particularities of my Youthful Life. . . .

In 1658, Thomas Ellwood's mother and elder brother both died. This naturally increased the young man's importance in the family, being left the only son. Lord Wenman would have probably helped him to some preferment—although he and the father Ellwood were not the best of friends. But at this time the whole current of Thomas Ellwood's life was changed.

During all these years the Ellwoods had kept up their old friendship with Lady Springett and had visited her and her husband, after she married Isaac Penington,

at their Country Lodgings, as at Datchet and at Causham [Caversham] Lodge near Reading.

And having heard, that they were come to live upon their own Estate at Chalfont in Buckinghamshire, about 15 miles from Crowell he [T. Ellwood's father] went one Day to visit them there, and to return at Night, taking me with him.

But very much surprised we were, when, being come thither,

we first heard, then found, they were become Quakers, a People we had no Knowledge of, and a Name we had, till then, scarce heard of.

So great a Change from a free, debonair and courtly sort of Behaviour, which we formerly had found them in, to so strict a Gravity as they now received us with, did not a little amuse us, and disappoint our Expectation of such a pleasant Visit as we used to have, and had now promised ourselves.

This is a valuable sidelight on the Penington household. From Mary Penington's account of her inward struggles before becoming a Quaker, too gloomy an impression might be gained. It is good to know that to casual guests she and her husband showed a "free, debonair and courtly sort of behaviour" and gave them "a pleasant visit."

Nor could my Father have any opportunity, by a private Conference with them, to understand the Ground or Occasion of this Change, there being some other Strangers with them (related to Isaac Penington) who came that morning from London to visit them also.

Another interesting sidelight. Even in these late Commonwealth days, when most people's minds were full of religious topics, it would seem to have been contrary to the rules of good breeding to discuss such matters at table.

The young Thomas, however, had a different object in view. It was not a private conference with his host that he desired.

For my part I sought, and at length found Means to cast myself into the Company of the Daughter, whom I found gathering Flowers in the Garden, attended by her Maid who was also a Quaker. But when I addressed myself to her after my accustomed Manner, with Intention to engage her in some Discourse, which might introduce Conversation, on the Foot of our former Acquaintance; though she treated me with a courteous Mien, yet, as young as she was, the Gravity of her Look and Behaviour struck such an Awe upon me, that I found myself not so much Master of myself, as to pursue any further Converse with her. Wherefore asking Pardon for my Boldness, in having intruded myself into her private Walks, I withdrew, not without some Disorder (as I thought at least) of Mind.

We staid Dinner, which was very handsome, and lacked

nothing to recommend it to me but the want of Mirth and pleasant Discourse, which we could neither have with them, nor, by reason of them, with one another amongst ourselves; the Weightiness that was upon their Spirits and Countenances, keeping down the Lightness that would have been up in us. We staid notwithstanding till the rest of the Company took leave of them, and then we also, doing the same, returned, not greatly satisfied with our journey, nor knowing what in particular to find Fault with.

Yet this good Effect that Visit had upon my Father, who was then in the Commission of the Peace, that it disposed him to a more favourable opinion of, and Carriage towards those People when they came his Way; as not long after one of them did. . . .

Chapter Two

“BUFFETINGS”

“The Young Man is Reach’d”

ELLWOOD continues:

Some Time after this, my Father having gotten some further Account of the People called Quakers, and being desirous to be informed concerning their Principles, made another visit to Isaac Penington and his Wife, at their House called the Grange in Peter’s Chalfont and took both my Sisters and me with him.

It was in the tenth Month [December] in the year 1659, that we went thither, where we found a very kind Reception, and tarried some Days; one Day at least the longer, for that, while we were there, a Meeting was appointed at a Place about a Mile from thence, to which we were invited to go, and willingly went.

It was held in a Farm House called The Grove, which having been formerly a Gentleman’s Seat, had a very large Hall, and that well filled.

To this Meeting came Edward Burrough, besides other Preachers, as Thomas Curtis and James Nailor; but none spake there at that Time but Edward Burrough. Next to whom (as it were under him) it was my lot to sit on a Stool by the Side of a long Table on which he sate¹ and I drank in his Words with Desire; for they not only answered my Understanding, but warmed my Heart with a certain Heat, which I had not till then felt from the Ministry of any Man.

When the Meeting was ended, our Friends took us Home, with them again; and after supper, the Evenings being long [winter evenings in December] the servants of the Family who were Quakers were called in and we all sate down in silence. But long we had not so sate before Edward Burrough began to speak among us.

¹ Did the early Friends often preach sitting on tables, or does this mean that both Burrough and Ellwood sat on the stool?

His sermon was not long, but it was enough to provoke Walter Ellwood, Thomas's father, "he having been from his Youth a Professor (though not join'd in what is called close Communion with any one sort) he began to make Objections to what Burrough had said," opposing apparently "the Calvinistic Tenet of particular and personal Predestination" to the Quaker doctrine of the Light within. Edward Burrough's reply, though short,

was close and cogent. But James Nailor interposing, handled the subject with so much Perspicuity and clear Demonstration, that his Reasoning seemed to be irresistible; and so I suppose my Father found it, which made him willing to drop the Discourse.

As for Edward Burrough, he was a brisk young Man, of a ready Tongue, and might have been, for ought I then knew, a Scholar, which made me the less to admire his Way of Reasoning. But what dropt from James Nailor had the greater Force upon me, because he look'd but like a plain simple Countryman, having the appearance of an Husbandman or a Shepherd.

As my Father was not able to maintain the Argument on his Side, so neither did they seem willing to drive it on to an Extremity on their Side. But treating him in a soft and gentle manner, did after a while let fall the Discourse, and then we withdrew to our respective Chambers.¹

The next morning Walter Ellwood with his son and younger daughter prepared to return home,

(for my elder Sister was gone before by the Stage Coach to London) and when having taken our Leaves of our Friends, we went forth, they, with Edward Burrough, accompanying us to the Gate, he then directed his Speech to us in a few Words to each of us severally according to the Sense he had of our Conditions.

And when we were gone off, and they gone in again, they asking him what he thought of us? he answered them (as they afterwards told me) to this Effect; "As for the Old Man, he is settled on his Lees; and the young Woman is light and airy;

¹ This description by an eyewitness of two of the most eminent among the early Quakers is valuable. Note especially their gentleness in leaving an opponent to form his own conclusions. Also that it occurred three years after Nayler's own savage punishment for blasphemy.

but the young Man is reach'd, and may do well if he don't lose it.”

“Reached” indeed Thomas was.

I knew not what I ailed, but I knew I ailed something more than ordinary, and my Heart was very heavy.

I found it was not so with my Father and Sister; for as I rode after the Coach I could hear them talk pleasantly one to the other, but they could not discern how it was with me, because I, riding on Horseback, kept much out of sight.

By that time we got Home it was Night.

All the little well-remembered details bring the scenes vividly before the reader. Therefore these important first visits to the Grange have been transcribed in Ellwood's own words. The full account of the anguish of soul he went through later, and of the cruel treatment he met with from his father when he had decided to join the Quakers, can be read in great detail in his own Journal.

The main principles of Quakerism seem to have given less offence to other people than its adherents' insistence on carrying them out in small details of their practice. Chief among these were their refusal to take oaths, their use of “plain language,” saying “Thee and Thou” instead of the customary “you” to a single person, and also refusing “hat-honour,” i.e. the practice of doffing the hat in the presence of elders and superiors.

It is distressing to read of Ellwood's protracted sufferings later on, on these accounts, and even of all it cost him for the first time to make a bold stand. This was when he was sent by his father on an errand to Oxford; and meeting some acquaintances who saluted him after

the usual Manner, putting off their Hats and bowing and saying “Your humble servant, Sir” expecting, no doubt, the same from me. But when they saw me stand still, not moving my Cap, nor bowing my knee in way of *Congee* to them, they were amazed. . . . At length the Surgeon, a brisk young man, who stood nearest to me, clapping his Hand in a familiar way upon my Shoulder, and smiling on me, said “What! Tom, a Quaker!” To which I readily and cheerfully answered, “Yes, a Quaker!” And as the words passed out of my mouth, I felt Joy spring in

my Heart, for I rejoiced that I had had Strength and Boldness given me, to confess myself one of that despised People.

Peace came to him, as to Mary Penington and to many another before and since, when once the decisive step had been taken. The account of his inward spiritual wrestlings, too long to be given here, is curiously like and yet different from those she describes in her own youth more than twenty years earlier and continuing till after her second marriage to Isaac Penington. To Ellwood, as to her, with inward peace came fierce outward sufferings—more painful in his case than even in hers. Perhaps also the spiritual traditions of the neighbourhood had an unconscious influence on the whole group of newly convinced Quakers.

Sir Ernest Barker, writing on the Hampden Tercentenary,¹ says:

About the year 1400, the lumbermen of the woods of the Chilterns had stood for religious liberty and embraced the Lollard cause. It is hardly fanciful to think that John Hampden, whether he knew it or no, continued faithful to their tradition.

. . . There is, after all, a *genius loci*; and it is no accident that Hampden and Burke were both members for the borough of Wendover—or that the Quakers flourished during the eighteenth century [and the seventeenth] in a county where the Lollards had flourished in the fifteenth. The Buckinghamshire tradition is no small part of our national History.

In *The Penn Country and the Chilterns*, the author, describing the little village of Crowell, says that “the house where Squire Ellwood bullied his son, on his becoming a Quaker, is still to be seen.” Elsewhere it is called “an old red-brick house.” The expression “bullying” is not too strong. Thomas was beaten, imprisoned in his room, kept without money, not allowed to use his father’s horses, all in order to prevent his attending meetings of the Quakers. Even visits to the Peningtons were forbidden; but these he did manage to carry out, and with these we are concerned.

The rest of his sufferings and the pithy dialogues between him and his father must be read in detail in the history of his

¹ 24 June 1943. Article in *Spectator* for 25 June 1943.

life. In the winter of 1659/60 he underwent serious bodily ill-treatment from his father, to the distress of his sister, who said:

“Indeed Sir, if you strike him any more, I will throw open the Casement and cry Murther; for I am afraid you will kill my Brother.” This stopt his Hand; and after some threatening Speeches, he commanded me to Get to my Chamber, which I did, as I always did whatever he bid me. . . . The rest of this Winter I spent in a lonesome solitary Life, having none to converse with, none to unbosom myself unto, none to ask Counsel of, none to seek Relief from, but the Lord alone, who yet was more than All. And Yet the Company and Society of faithful and judicious Friends, would, I thought, have been very welcome as well as helpful to me in my spiritual Travel; in which I thought I made but slow Progress. . . . The sense of which drew from me the following Lines:

The Winter Tree
 Resembles me,
 Whose sap lies in its Root;
 The Spring draws nigh;
 As it, so I
 Shall bud, I hope, and shoot.

And with the spring of 1660 came the joy of a visit from Isaac Penington and his wife, who came

to make a Visit to my Father and see how it fared with me: And very welcome they were to me, whatever they were to him; to whom I doubt not but they would have been more welcome, had it not been for me. They tarried with us all Night, and much Discourse they had with my Father, both about the principles of Truth in general, and me in particular; which I was not privy to.

But one thing that he only heard of afterwards is important. On the Ellwoods' visit to Chalfont Grange some months before, Mary Penington had mentioned what hard treatment her husband Isaac had met with from his father, the Alderman, about Isaac's keeping on his hat, which Walter Ellwood did

very much censure the Alderman for: wondering that so wise a Man as he was, should take notice of such a trivial Thing as the putting of or keeping on of a Hat; and he spared not to blame him liberally for it.

This gave her a Handle to take hold of him by, and having had an ancient Acquaintance with him, and he having always had an high Opinion of and Respect for her; she, who was a Woman of great Wisdom, of ready Speech, and of a well-resolved Spirit, did press so close upon him with this Home-argument, that he was utterly at a loss how to defend himself.

The upshot was that “after Dinner next day when the Peningtons were ready to take Coach to return home” they obtained leave for Thomas “to go and spend some Time with them where I should be sure to be welcome.”

So, without a hat (his own having been confiscated) until his sister brought him one, and without “one Penny of Money about me,” Thomas set out for Chalfont. His penniless condition brought him into great difficulties. He could not even go to an inn for food—and was almost imprisoned at Maidenhead for riding on the Sabbath.

Ellwood’s own account says he

had been at Reading, and set out from thence on the First-day of the week in the morning, intending to reach (as in point of fact I well might) to Isaac Penington’s where the Meeting was to be on that day; but when I came to Maidenhead, a thorough-fair Town on the Way, I was stopt by the Watch for riding on that Day.

He was taken by the Watch to the Constable, and by the Constable to the Warden. After considerable altercation,

The Warden holding up his Hand and smiling said, “Bless me! I never met with such a Man as you are before . . .” Then turning to the Constable he said, “Have him to the *Greyhound*, and bid the People be civil to him.”

Summers adds the important note: “‘Have him to the *Greyhound*, Constable.’ Accordingly in a few minutes Ellwood found himself in the Greyhound Inn, the same old hostelry where, thirteen years before, the captive King Charles, after a long separation, had been allowed to meet three of his children, while the stern Cromwell looked on with an unwonted relenting at what he afterwards described as ‘the tenderest sight he ever beheld.’”

This stop I met with at Maidenhead had spent me so much time that when I came to Isaac Penington's, the Meeting was half over. . . . Great was the Love and manifold the Kindnesses which I received from these my worthy Friends, while I abode in their family. They were indeed as affectionate Parents and tender Nurses to me, in this Time of my religious Childhood. . . .

But that I might not, on the one Hand, bear too hard upon my Friends, nor on the other hand, forget the House of Thraldom; after I had staid with them some six or seven weeks (from the Time called Easter to the Time called Whitsuntide) I took my Leave of them to depart home, intending to walk to Wiccomb in one Day, and from thence Home in another.

And on his return the old difficulties began again, not bodily ill-treatment this time, but, as he still refused to remove the “Hive on his Head,” as his father called his hat, he was told to take his meals by himself, whereupon Thomas

went into the Kitchen, where I staid till the Servants went to Dinner, and then sate down very contentedly with them . . . and did so from thenceforward, so long as he and I lived together.

Having now “much more Quiet at home” he took more liberty to go abroad “amongst my Friends”—and attended any meetings within reach, whatever the weather,

being commonly in the Winter-time . . . wet up to the Ancles at least, yet through the Goodness of the Lord to me, I was preserved in Health.

This was now the spring of 1660 and Restoration time.

Thomas went to London to see about publishing a paper he had written and

While I was then in London I went to a little Meeting of Friends, which was then held in the house of one Humphrey Bache, a Goldsmith, at the sign of the Snail in Tower-Street. It was then a very troublesome Time, not from the Government but from the Rabble of Boys and rude People, who upon the Turn of the Times (at the Return of the King) took Liberty to be very abusive.

When the Meeting ended, a pretty Number of these unruly Folk were got together at the Door, ready to receive the Friends as they came forth, not only with evil Words but with Blows.

Thomas expected to have his share of these when he came out, but instead

they said one to another, Let him alone; don't meddle with him; he is no Quaker I warrant you.

This struck me, and was worse to me than if they had laid their Fists on me as they did on others. I was troubled to think what these rude People saw in me, that made them not take me for a Quaker.

And upon a close Examination of myself, with respect to my Habit and Deportment, I could find nothing to place it on, but that I then had on my Head a large Montier-cap of black Velvet, the Skirt of which being turned up in Folds, looked, it seems above the then common Garb of a Quaker; and this put me out of Conceit with my Cap.

In another place Ellwood describes this as "a large Mountier cap of black velvet," "a dress more used then than now." His editor, Crump, says, "A Montero-cap is a cap with a round crown and flaps to draw down over the ears and cheeks, which would thus conceal the face." This explains why Edward Burrough and he once passed on the road without recognizing each other. Brewer (*Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*), says: *Monteer Cap*, so called from Monteros d'Espinoza (Mountaineers) who once formed the interior guard of the Spanish King. *Monsters Cap* properly means a huntsman's cap. But Sir Walter Scott tells us that Sir Jeffrey Hudson wore "a large Monter's hat," meaning a Spanish hat with a feather.

From this visit to London Thomas Ellwood returned to Isaac Penington's hospitable home, and met there Thomas Loe of Oxford—who was later on to be instrumental in convincing William Penn. This was about the time of

the mad Prank of those infatuated Fifth Monarchy Men [7 January 1661] . . . when letters were intercepted and broken open for the Discovery of fresh Plots and Designs against the Government.

An innocent letter from Thomas Ellwood to Thomas Loe, then imprisoned at Oxford Castle, asking him to attend a meeting, had the worst construction put upon it. Soldiers were

thereupon sent to apprehend Ellwood at his father's house. He was brought to the house of a certain

Esquire Clark of Weston by Thame; . . . a jolly Man, too much addicted to Drinking in soberer Times, but was now grown more licentious that way, as the Times did now more favour Debauchery. He and I had known one another for some Years, though not very intimately, having met sometimes at Lord Wenman's Table.

He and his fellow Justices told Ellwood that

It was dangerous to write Letters to appoint Meetings in such troublesome Times. . . . By endeavouring to gather a Concourse of People together, in such a Juncture especially as this was, I had rendered myself a dangerous Person.

They therefore tendered the Oath of Allegiance or Supremacy, and on his refusing to take it on “the Quaker Ground of the unlawfulness of all Oaths,” he was committed to prison at Oxford.

It was almost dark when we took Horse, and we had about 9 or 10 Miles to ride, the weather thick and cold (for it was about the beginning of the 12th Month [February]) and I had no Boots, being snatch'd away from Home on a sudden, which made me care not to ride very fast.

A servant of his Father's attempted to rescue him and fight the trooper, but Ellwood “check'd him sharply for that” and sent him home.

At Oxford, instead of being sent to join the Quakers in prison in the Castle

my Trooper stop'd in the High St, and was received by the Master of a Shop, a genteel courteous Man, by trade a Linen-Draper and as I afterwards understood, the City Marshall whose Prisoner I was to be.

Various Oxford Friends visited him. Thomas Loe sent him an encouraging letter from the Castle ending

We are more than Forty here, who suffer innocently . . . because we cannot Swear and break Christ's Commands. And

we are all well; and the Blessing and Presence of God is with us. Friends here salute thee. Farewell.

Isaac Penington, too, now in prison at Aylesbury, also wrote to him an encouraging letter, praying that he might be kept "fresh in thy Spirit in the midst of thy sufferings."

After some time Thomas was sent home with the Marshall to his father's house, but as a prisoner still.

When we were come to Weston where Esquire Clark lived, he took the Marshall and some others with him into the Parlour; but I was left in the Hall, to be exposed . . . for the Family to gaze on. At length himself [Squire Clark] came out to me, leading in his Hand a beloved Daughter of his, a young woman of about 18 Years of Age, who wanted nothing to have made her comely, but Gravity. An airy Piece, she was; and very merry she made herself at me. When she had thoroughly viewed me, he, putting her a little forward towards me, said "Here, Tom, will you kiss her?" I was grieved and ashamed at this frothy Lightness and I suppose he must have perceived it; whereupon he drew nearer, as if he would have whispered; [and made a much more outrageous suggestion].

At which I, with a disdainful Look, turning away, he said, "I think it would be better for you than to be a Quaker" and so little Consideration and Regard for Modesty had she, that she added "I think so too." This was all by Candlelight.

This episode, besides being a vivid glimpse into the manners of those early Restoration days, belongs to this story because it shows how firmly Ellwood's tastes, if not his devoted love, were already fixed on "gravity." The friend of Gulielma Springett was not to be caught by the blandishments of any "airy Piece."

Other adventures follow, when Ellwood, though a nominal prisoner in his father's house, slipped away to join Friends at Meeting. Then comes a historical note, worth transcribing:

Nor was it long after this, before I was left not only to myself, but in a manner by myself. For the Time appointed for the Coronation of the King (which was the 23rd of the 2nd Month called April) drawing on, my Father, taking my two Sisters with him, went up to London some Time before, that they might be there in Readiness, and put themselves into a Condi-

tion to see that so great a Solemnity, leaving nobody in the House but myself and a couple of Servants. And though this was intended only for a Visit on that Occasion, yet it proved the Breaking of the Family; for he bestowed both his Daughters there in Marriage, and took Lodgings for himself, so that afterwards they never returned to settle at Crowell.

Thomas Ellwood, being now his own master, often walked over to Aylesbury to visit Isaac Penington and the sixty or seventy other Friends who were imprisoned there. This, he says, was

a pretty long Way (some eight or nine miles) too far to be walked forward and backward in one day

so he often spent a day or two there among the prisoners, and “lay in the Malthouse among my Friends with whom I delighted to be.”

He was almost arrested on one occasion and had some lively adventures, once being helped by the mother of an infant whose cradle he had rocked, when it cried,

in my own Defence, that I might not be annoyed by a Noise to me not more unpleasant than unusual.

Another time he was threatened with the Spiritual Court, by a constable who was

a budge Fellow and talked high. He was a shoe-maker by Trade, and his Name was Clark.

This is one of Ellwood’s cameo-like portraits, a pendant to that of the other constable whom he describes as

a brisk, genteel young Man, a Shopkeeper in the Town [Maidenhead] whose name was Cherry.

After Isaac Penington’s release, Ellwood paid several more visits to the Grange. On his return home from one of these visits

I had not been long at home, before an Illness seized on me, which proved to be the Small-pox. Of which, so soon as Friends had Notice, I had a Nurse sent me; and in a while Isaac Penington and his Wife’s Daughter, Gulielma Maria Springett

(to whom I had been Play-fellow in our Infancy) came to visit me, bringing with them our dear Friend Edward Burrough, by whose Ministry I was called to the knowledge of the Truth.

It was only fair that Gulielma should come to visit her old friend in his illness, for two years previously, in 1659, he had been to a meeting at Chalfont Grange before he had actually become a Quaker and without knowing that Gulielma herself was ill of smallpox upstairs.

His graphic account of this may come in here:

It being fifteen long Miles thither [from Crowell to Chalfont], and the Ways bad, and my Nag but small it was in the Afternoon that I got thither. And understanding by the servant that took my Horse, that there was then a Meeting in the House (as there was Weekly on that Day, which was the Fourth Day of the Week, though I till then understood it not) I hastened in; and knowing the Rooms, went directly to the little Parlour, where I found a few Friends sitting together in Silence, and I sate down among them well-satisfied, though without Words.

When the Meeting was ended, and those of the Company, who were Strangers, withdrawn, I addressed myself to Isaac Penington and his Wife, who received me courteously but not knowing what exercise I had been in [his Father's ill-treatment] and yet was under, nor having heard anything of me since I had been there before in another Garb, were not forward at first to lay sudden Hands on me; which I observed and did not dislike. But as they came to see a Change in me, not in Habit, only, but in Gesture, Speech and Carriage, and which was more, in Countenance also, (for the Exercise I had passed through and yet was under, had imprinted a visible Character of Gravity upon my Face;) they were exceeding kind and tender towards me.

There was then in the Family a Friend, whose name was Anne Curtis, the Wife of Thomas Curtis of Reading, who was come upon a visit to them, and particularly to see Mary Penington's Daughter Guli, who had been ill of the Small-pox since I had been there before. Betwixt Mary Penington and this Friend, I observed some private Discourse and Whisperings, and I had an Apprehension that it was upon something that concerned me. Wherefore I took the Freedom to ask Mary Penington if my coming thither had occasioned any Inconvenience in the Family? She asked me, "If I had had

the Small-pox?” I told her no. She then told me, her Daughter had newly had them, and though she was well-recovered of them, she had not as yet been down amongst them; but intended to have come down, and sate with them in the Parlour that Evening; yet would rather forbear till another Time, than endanger me. And that “That was the Matter they had been discoursing of.”

I assured her that I had always been and then more especially, was free from any Apprehension of Danger in that respect; and therefore intreated, that her Daughter might come down. And although they were somewhat slow to yield to it, in regard of me, yet my Importunity prevailed, and after Supper she did come down and sit with us; and tho’ the Marks of her Distemper were fresh upon her, yet they made no Impression upon me, Faith keeping out Fear.

Possibly not only Faith, but Hope and Love as well? Was there ever a more guileless narrative? No wonder Gulielma accompanied her father when Thomas was in his turn laid low by the same malady.

Happily in 1661 Thomas soon recovered.

It pleased the Lord to deal favourably with me in this Illness, both inwardly and outwardly. For His supporting Presence was with me, which kept my spirit near unto Him; and though the Distemper was strong upon me, yet I was preserved through it, and my Countenance was not much altered by it. But after I was got up again, and while I kept my Chamber, wanting some employment for Entertainment-sake to spend the Time with, [all convalescents still know this mood only too well] and there being at hand a pretty good Library of Books (amongst which were the Works of Augustine, and others of those ancient Writers, who were by many called the *Fathers*) I betook myself to Reading. And these Books being printed in the old Black-letter, with Abbreviations of the Words, difficult to be read, I spent too much Time therein, and thereby much impaired my Sight, which was not strong before, and was now weaker than usual, by reason of that Illness I had so newly had, which proved an Injury to me afterwards; for which reason I here mention it.

Anne Curtis, referred to above, wife of Thomas Curtis, the woollen-draper of Reading, who had had a large share in convincing Isaac and Mary Penington of the truth of Quakerism

(see page 35, *supra*), was herself a notable woman among the early Friends, especially after the Restoration. Her father, when Sheriff of Bristol, had been hanged outside his own door for loyalty to the Stuarts. This made her *persona grata* in the Court of Charles II, where she often interceded on behalf of imprisoned Friends.¹

¹ See *A Quaker Saint of Cornwall*, p. 16.

Chapter Three

“MY MASTER MILTON”

“After he lost his sight he had a Man to read to him”—AUBREY

THE clear and careful dates in Ellwood's Journal are a blessing for which all readers must be thankful to him. If only Fox had inserted the same full and accurate notes of time in his writings! Here Thomas states concisely:

After I was well enough to go abroad, with respect to my own Health, and the Safety of others, I went up (in the Beginning of the Twelfth Month 1661) [February 1662] to my Friend Isaac Penington's at Chalfont, and abode there some Time, for the airing of myself more fully, that I might be more fit for Conversation.

Thomas Ellwood seized this opportunity of continuing the studies he had previously had to give up owing to his being taken too young from school.

Nor was I rightly sensible of my Loss therein, until I came among the Quakers. But then I both saw my Loss and lamented it; and applied myself with utmost Diligence, at all leisure Times, to recover it. . . .

But though I toiled hard and spared no Pains to regain what once I had been Master of, yet I found it a matter of so great Difficulty [that he applied to Isaac Penington] my especial Friend [to help to find a teacher] which put him upon considering and contriving a Means for my Assistance. He had an intimate Acquaintance with Dr. Paget,¹ a Physician of Note in London, and he with John Milton, a Gentleman of great Note for Learning throughout the learned World, for the accurate Pieces [!] he had written on various Subjects and Occasions.

This Person, having filled a publick Station in the former

¹ Dr. Nathan Paget (d. 1678) was Milton's physician and cousin to Elizabeth Minshall, the poet's third wife. (Crump.)

Times, lived now a private and retired Life in London; and having wholly lost his Sight, kept always a Man to read to him, which usually was the son of some Gentleman of his Acquaintance, whom, in Kindness, he took in to improve him in his Learning.¹

Thus, by the Mediation of my Friend Isaac Penington with Dr. Paget, and of Dr. Paget with John Milton, was I admitted to come to him; not as a Servant to him (which at that Time he needed not) nor to be in the House with him; but only to have the Liberty of coming to his House, at certain Hours, when I would, and to read to him what Books he should appoint me; which was all the Favour I desired.

But this being a Matter which would require some Time to bring it about, I, in the meanwhile, returned to my Father's House in Oxfordshire.

After a lonely winter at Crowell, where he "lived like a Hermit all alone," and after having wound up affairs there by his father's directions, Thomas writes:

. . . taking my leave of Crowell, went up to my sure Friend Isaac Penington again. Where understanding that the Mediation used for my Admittance to John Milton, had succeeded so well, that I might come when I would, I hastened to London, and in the first Place went to wait upon him. [1662.]

He received me courteously, as well for the sake of Dr. Paget who introduced me, as of Isaac Penington who recommended me; to both of whom he bore a good Respect.

It is important, surely, in estimating Isaac Penington, to remember that he was esteemed by such a man as Milton.

And having enquired divers Things of me, with Respect to my former Progression in Learning, he dismissed me, to provide myself of such Accommodations as might be most suitable to my future Studies.

I went therefore and took myself a Lodging as near to his House (which was then in Jewen-street) as conveniently as I

¹ The following extract from John Aubrey (*Brief Lives*, ii, p. 68) throws light on Ellwood's position and duties in Milton's household:

John Milton "was an early riser (scil. at 4 a clock *mane*); yea, after he lost his sight. He had a man to read to him. The first thing he read was the Hebrew Bible, and that was at 4 h. *mane*, $\frac{1}{2}$ h. +). Then he contemplated. At 7 his man came to him again, and wrote till dinner: the writing was as much as the reading. His daughter Deborah could read to him Latin, Italian, French and Greek. . . . After dinner he used to walk three or four hours at a time (he always had a garden where he lived); went to bed about 9 o.c."

could, and from thenceforward went every Day in the Afternoon, except on the First-days of the Week, and sitting by him in his Dining-room, read to him in such Books in the Latin Tongue¹ as he pleased to hear me read.

At my first sitting to read to him, observing that I used the English Pronunciation, he told me “If I would have the benefit of the Latin Tongue, not only to read and understand Latin Authors, but to converse with Foreigners, either abroad or at home, I must learn the foreign Pronunciation.”

To this I consenting, he instructed me how to sound the vowels; so different from the common Pronunciation used by the English, who speak *Anglice* their Latin, that (with some few other Variations in sounding some Consonants, in particular cases; as “C” before “E” or “I,” like “Ch” “Sc” before “I” as Si, etc) the Latin thus spoken, seemed as different from that which was delivered, as the English generally speak it, as if it were another Language.²

I had before, during my retired Life at my Father’s, by unwearied Diligence and Industry so far recovered the Rules of Grammar (in which I had once been very ready) that I could both read a Latin Author, and after a Sort hammer out his Meaning. But this Change of Pronunciation proved a new Difficulty to me. It was now harder to me to read, than it was before to understand when read. But

. . . *Labor omnia vincit*
Improbis . . .
 Incessant Pains,
 The End obtains.

And so did I. Which made my Reading the more acceptable to my Master. He, on the other hand, perceiving with what earnest Desire I pursued Learning, gave me not only all the Encouragement, but all the Help he could. For having a curious Ear, he understood by my Tone, when I understood what I read, and when I did not; and accordingly would stop me, examine me, and open the most difficult Passages to me.

Is not that a valuable and beautiful glimpse of Milton in his blindness? And is it not strange that we owe it to this obscure Quaker youth whom he befriended? After his association with

¹ In 1669 Milton published a Latin grammar he had written long before.

² Aubrey notes that Milton “pronounced the letter R very hard—a certain signe of a satyricall Wit.” Also that he was “extreme pleasant in his conversation: but satyricall.”

Milton a certain innocent pedagogy is often observable in Ellwood's writings. He also endeavours, without much success, to express his own thoughts and feelings in verse.

Thus went I on for about six Weeks time, reading to him in the Afternoons; and exercising myself with my own Books, in my Chamber in the Forenoons, I was sensible of an Improvement. But, alas! I had fixed my Studies in a wrong place. London and I could never agree for Health; my Lungs, as I suppose, were too tender to bear the sulphurous Air of that City, so that I soon began to droop; and in less than two months time, I was fain to leave both my Studies and the City and return into the Country to preserve Life; and much ado I had to get thither.

I chose to go down to Wiccomb, and to John Rance's House there; both as he was a Physician, and his Wife an honest, hearty, discreet and grave matron, whom I had a very good Esteem of, and who I knew had a good Regard for me.

John Rance, or Raunce, was a doctor of medicine at Amer-sham. In later years Thomas Ellwood had violent controversy with him, as he followed Story and Wilkinson while Ellwood was a strong adherent of Fox. (Crump, p. 15 *n.*)

There I lay ill a considerable Time, and to that degree of Weakness, that scarce any who saw me expected my Life. But the Lord was both gracious to me in my Illness, and was pleased to raise me up again, that I might serve Him in my Generation.

As soon as I had recovered so much Strength as to be fit to travel, I obtained of my Father (who was then at his House in Crowell to dispose of some Things he had there, and who in my illness had come to see me) so much Money as would clear all Charges in the House, for both Physick, Food and Attendance; and having fully discharged all, I took leave of my Friends in that Family and in the Town, and returned to my Studies at London.

I was very kindly received by my Master, who had conceived so good an Opinion of me, that my Conversation (I found) was acceptable to him, and he seem'd heartily glad of my Recovery and Return; and into our old Method of Study we fell again, I reading to him and he explaining to me, as Occasion required.

But, as if Learning had been a forbidden Fruit to me, scarcely was I well settled in my Work, before I met with another Diversion which turned me quite out of my Work.

This new interruption proved to be several months of severe imprisonment, first in Bridewell and then in Newgate, “in measure a Type of Hell upon Earth.” “Diversion” seems rather a euphemism for such an experience. In Bridewell, Ellwood was at first without enough money even to buy food, but hearing of his plight (his imprisonment was caused by his having attended a meeting at the Bull and Mouth, whence he and other Friends were carried straight to prison) first William Penington (a brother of Isaac) and then Mary Penington, and finally his own father, sent him money to buy his needful victuals.

The account of how in Newgate the prisoners slept the night in three tiers of hammocks, fastened to the wall at one end and to a central pillar in the other, and how they were lodged at first near “a little By Place like a Closet where there lay the quartered Bodies of three Men who had been executed some days before for a real or pretended Plot,” “for that was the Ground, or at least the Pretext, for that Storm in the City which had caused this Imprisonment of the Quakers”—all this and much more must be read in detail in Ellwood’s graphic Journal.

Want of “Employment” was one of Ellwood’s chief complaints. While other prisoners were generally tradesmen they could set themselves to work, but Ellwood was not considered sufficiently skilful even to be allowed to help them. However, while in Bridewell he procured work from

an Hosier in Cheap-side, which was to make Night-Waistcoats of red and yellow Flannel, for Women and Children. And with this I entred myself among the Taylors, sitting Cross-leg’d as they did, and so spent those leisure Hours with Innocency and Pleasure, which Want of Business would have made tedious.

Another employment, very natural to one who had been secretary to John Milton, was the expression of his thoughts in rhymes which he doubtless hoped were poetry. Ellwood’s verses are curiously stilted and unreal, wholly lacking in the simple charm of his Journal. But part of one of these “poems” is worth quoting for the light it throws on the fashionable dress and costumes of the time, and of later times also.

But, oh! the Luxury and great Excess
 Which by this wanton Age is us'd in Dress!
 What Pains do Men and Women take, alas!
 To make themselves for arrant Bedlam's pass!
 The Fool's py'd Coat, which all wise Men detest,
 Is grown a Garment now in great Request;
 More Colours in one Waistcoat now they wear,
 Than in the Rain-bow ever did appear,
 As if they were ambitious to put on
 All Colours that they cast their Eyes upon;
 Thereby outstripping the Cameleon quite,
 Which cannot change itself to red or white.

And he that in a modest Garb is drest,
 Is made the Laughing-stock of all the rest,
 Nor are they with their Baubles satisfy'd,
 But Sex-Distinctions too are laid aside;
 The Women wear the Trowsies and the Vest,
 While Men in Muffs, Fans, Peticoats are drest.
 Some women (Oh, the shame!) like ramping Rigs
 Ride flaunting in their powder'd Perriwigs;
 Astride they sit (and not ashamed neither)
 Drest up like men in Jacket, Cap and Feather.
 All things to Lust and Wantonness are fitted,
 Nothing that tends to Vanity omitted.

From Newgate, Thomas and other prisoners were returned to Bridewell once more, where conditions were evidently rather better, but hearing that his "dear Friend and Father in Christ," Edward Burrough, was now in Newgate with other Friends, Thomas sought for and obtained permission to visit them there. He remained at Bridewell "under easy Restraint" "till the Court sate at the Old Baily again"; and then,

whether it was that the Heat of the Storm was somewhat abated, or by what other Means Providence wrought it, I know not, we were called to the Bar, and without further Question discharged. . . .

Being now at Liberty, I visited more generally my Friends that were still in Prison [Edward Burrough died in Newgate not long after this] and more particularly my Friend and Benefactor, William Penington at his House, and then went to wait upon my Master Milton.

Milton himself had been imprisoned for a few months in the preceding year, so he would know the cost of such an experience. Ellwood explained that before he could resume his “intermitted Studies with the Poet” he must go to Buckinghamshire to visit his “worthy Friends Isaac Penington and his virtuous Wife, with other Friends in that Country.”

Thither therefore I betook myself, and the Weather being frosty, and the Ways, by that means, clean and good [a side-light on the usual state of seventeenth-century roads] I walked it thorow in a day and was received by my Friends there with such Demonstration of hearty Kindness, as made my Journey very easy to me.

His first care was to repay the money Mary Penington had sent him for his sustenance in prison,

with due Acknowledgment of her and her husband’s great Care of me and Liberality to me in the Time of my Need. She would have had me kept it. But I beg’d her to accept it from me again, since it was the Redundancy of their Kindness. And my Importunity prevailed.

Thomas had only intended to pay a visit of a few days to his friends and then to return to London, “but Providence ordered it otherwise.” In the end he remained as a more or less permanent inmate of the Peningtons’ home for the next seven years.

Living thus under the same roof with Gulielma, his story merges into hers, as will be recorded, often still in his own words, in the following Book.

BOOK FOUR

GULIELMA

“A very Pearl of Prettiness”—MASSON’S *Milton*

Unspecified extracts in Book Four are taken from
The History of Thomas Ellwood, written by his own Hand
(Third Edition, 1725)

Chapter One

“SPARKLINGS OF DESIRE”

“The Importunity of many Suitors”—AUBREY

IN 1662, when Thomas Ellwood, on his release from Newgate, came on what he expected to be only a short visit to his friends the Peningtons at the Grange, Chalfont St. Peter, in Buckinghamshire, he found there also his old friend and playmate, Gulielma Springett, the daughter of Mary Penington by her first husband.

Gulielma was now a girl of about eighteen, having been born in the early spring of 1643/4. She was “descended from that Puritan aristocracy the fairest flower of English Life.”¹ She already possessed two small stepbrothers and a stepsister many years younger than herself: John Penington, born 1655, Mary, born 1657, and Isaac, born about 1662. In after years William, born 1665, and Edward, born 1667, were to complete the group. Two other children had died in infancy.

Gulielma herself had become a Friend three years before, at the same time as her mother and stepfather. But in spite of her Quakerism, she had many suitors for her hand, being what was then considered “a great heiress, with considerable estates in counties Kent and Sussex and in Ireland.”

She herself is described as “a comely Personage, of a temper not easily moved to extremes.” [In person and qualities she was said to be the] image of her Father, Sir William Springett, being virtuous, generous, wise, humble, generally beloved for those good qualities and one more—the great cures she does, having great skill in physic and surgery, which she freely bestows. (Aubrey.)

¹ Brailsford.

Evidently she had inherited this power of healing from her grandmother, Madam Springett, who had been for several years an inmate of Gulielma's home, during her childhood.

In 1662, the education of the young Peningtons had to be considered. Though the eldest of them, John, was only seven and Mary his sister five, their previous tutor had already been dismissed because

he pretended no higher than the English Tongue, and had led them by Grammar Rules to the highest improvement they were capable of in that. [At seven and five years old!] He had then taken his Leave of them and was gone up to London to teach an English School of Friends Children there.

This was at Waltham Abbey, founded 1668, as was the other Friends School at Shacklewell, where George Fox wrote that the lasses were to be taught all things “civil and useful in the creation.” This ardour for making tiny children learn Latin persisted till modern times. For example, my father, Thomas Hodgkin, remembered only too well being taken up from his sick bed at the age of four, after his mother's death, to learn *Amo, Amas, Amat*.

Therefore Isaac Penington, who had brought the tutor, Richard Bradley, all the way from Lancashire, was put “in a fresh Strait” by his departure.

He sought for a new Teacher to instruct his children in the Latin Tongue, as the old one had done in the English, but had not yet found one.

At this juncture, providentially it must have seemed to him, Thomas Ellwood was released from prison and came to visit his friends at the Grange.

Wherefore one Evening [Ellwood writes] as we sate together by the Fire in his Bed-chamber (which for want of health he kept) [Poor, delicate Isaac Penington. How he must have suffered during his years of imprisonment in miserable gaols, in stone cells, often open to the weather.] he asked me, his Wife being by, If I would be so kind to him as to stay a while with him, till he could hear of such a Man as he aimed at; and in the mean Time enter his Children in the Rudiments of the

Latin Tongue. The question was not more unexpected than surprizing to me [Ellwood continues, and was possibly almost equally unwelcome, as he had hoped to endeavour to improve himself “by following my studies with my Master, Milton, at the end of a few days”].

However, on thinking the matter over, and recalling how much the family had done for him, he felt obliged to consent and to promise to try to give these infants

an Initiation only, by Accidence into Grammar . . . [till a more qualified Person should be found] without further Treaty or mention of Terms between us, than that of mutual Friendship.

This rather sketchy arrangement proved more satisfactory and lasting than might have been expected. Thomas Ellwood became the friend as well as the instructor of his young pupils. More than fifty years later the only survivor of the group, Mary (Penington) Wharley, wrote in a *Testimony* to Ellwood after his death in 1713:

He was invited by his much valued Friend Isaac Penington, to his House, where he abode several Years until he married. He was a Blessing in, as well as a great Comfort and Help to that Family; and by his wise Conduct therein, gained much Esteem, not only from the Elders, but the Youth, whom he instructed in Learning; and though most of them are by Death removed, yet One still remains, who from certain and experimental Knowledge, can commemorate his Worth; being engaged thereto, from a Sense of the Benefit of his good and wholesome Advice, given at sundry Times and on divers Occasions. Which Friendship continued firm until the last.

A curious memento of this tutorial association remains in a fragment of script dated 1671, in Thomas Ellwood's well-known handwriting. This records the weights of himself and his wife and two friends, or servants, as well as that of the writer of the above testimony, Mary Penington, junior, then a girl in her teens. This forms part of the collection of Quaker autographs made by my great-grandfather, Luke Howard, F.R.S., and is now in the possession of the Reference Library at Friends House.¹

¹ At the foot of the fragment of script is the following explanatory note in Luke Howard's handwriting: “T. E. born 1639 was weighed at 32 and again at 52 and found to have gained lb 20.”

For the next seven years, therefore, Thomas became an inmate of the Peningtons' home, teaching the younger children, and becoming the intimate friend of his early playfellow, Gulielma, for whom he naïvely confesses he felt some “sparklings of desire” before he realized that she was not for him.

The beginning of his tutorship was marked by sorrowful tidings: the news that Edward Burrough “had been taken away by hasty Death,” i.e. had died of gaol-fever in Newgate on 14 February 1663. His end was undoubtedly hastened by “the cruel malice and malicious cruelty” (note the style) of Alderman Sir Richard Browne. “That old Oliverian wood-monger,” as his enemies called him, kept Burrough in gaol even after Charles II had actually sent a warrant for his release. Thomas Ellwood considered that Edward Burrough had been

the Immediate Instrument of my Convincement [and had] an High Affection for him resulting therefrom. [This] did so deeply affect my Mind that it was some pretty time before my Passion could prevail to express itself in words.

So true I found those of the Tragædian

*Curae leves loquuntur
Ingentes Stupent*

Light Griefs break forth, and easily get Vent
Great Ones are thro' Amazement closely pent.

Until at length, “my Muse not bearing to be any longer mute, brake forth in the following Acrostick which she called ‘A pathetick Elegy’” and so on.

Milton's influence is only too evident in his pupil's simple endeavours to express himself in verse that alas! never comes near to being poetry.

The last stanza of the long lament is the only one that retains any freshness to-day:

While I had thus been breathing forth my Grief,
In hopes thereby to get me some Relief,
I heard, methought, his Voice say, “Cease to mourn,
I Live; and though the Vail of Flesh, once worn,
Be now stript off, dissolv'd and laid aside,
My Spirit's with thee, and shall so abide.”

This satisfy'd me; down I threw my Quill,
Willing to be resign'd to God's pure Will."

1663. Having discharged this Duty to the Memory of my deceased Friend, I went on in my new Province, instructing my little Pupils in the Rudiments of the Latin Tongue, to the mutual satisfaction of both their Parents and myself.

The remaining specimens of the young Peningtons' handwriting show that Ellwood also helped them almost to rival his own excellent script. In this he seems to have influenced Gulielma too, for, except that a few letters are differently formed, it is often difficult to distinguish between his handwriting and hers.

As soon as I had gotten a little Money in my Pocket, which as a Premium without Compact I received from them, I took the first opportunity to return to my Friend William Penington [Isaac's brother] the Money which he had so kindly furnished me with in my Need, at the Time of my Imprisonment in Bridewell; with a due Acknowledgment of my Obligation to him. He was not at all forward to receive it, so that I was fain to press it upon him.

The next entry in his Journal must be transcribed in full:

While thus I remained in this Family, various suspicions arose in the Minds of some concerning me, with respect to Mary Penington's fair Daughter Guli. For she, having now arrived to a marriageable Age, and being in all respects a very desirable Woman (whether respect was had to her outward Person, which wanted nothing to render her compleatly comely; or to the endowments of her Mind, which were every way extraordinary and highly obliging; or to her outward Fortune, which was fair, and which with some hath not the last, nor the least Place in Consideration) she was openly and secretly sought, and solicited by many, and some of them almost of every Rank and Condition; Good and Bad, Rich and Poor, Friend and Foe. To whom, in their respective Turns (till he at length came, for whom she was reserved) she carried herself with so much Evenness of Temper, such courteous Freedom, guarded with the strictest Modesty, that, as it gave Encouragement, or Ground of Hopes to none, so neither did it administer any matter of Offence, or just Cause of Complaint to any.

With the

ting s. with a truly great at...
of truly love. y^e Lord's name...
in this day of true...
& friends... yours of...
welcome. for my... but your... would have been...
minds acceptable especially for being fairly deprived of
company of my dear father who went to visit friends
Reading &... for... who after a great deal
discourse & reviving language rendered him of such service
to go home he hath better been had to... & rendered
so y^t in short time to come to a... unless y^e put a
stop to y^e wicked intentions we could rather if y^e might
he had been in almost any other place but in all things we
learned to be content & desire to be given to us in his will
whom this nor any other trial could come to us & we know
order all things for y^e good of those y^e put there, trust in him
... hear about are generally well & meetings yet quiet wth
not but look upon as a great thing especially when we con-
siderous sufferings of friends meet wth all in other places wth a
wides to mention in particular I am y^e was here at two of our
meetings & they were very large we were fairly at London &...
were very well we speak wth Will &aily who came y^e night before
so long from Barbadoes he said y^e there she was very well & y^e
place agreed very well wth him we expect him home very shortly
if nothing prevents Jo: Stubs was also here. And desired y^e dear
love to thee. T & S dear love is to thee. I & J with mine
dearly to them &c



Who am thy friend
in y^e lasting friendship

Gulielma Springett

Elizabeth Walmsley
dear love is to thee &c
as also S Hs



REPUTED PORTRAIT OF GULIELMA

Aubrey says:

She early espoused the same way, [Quakerism] about anno 1657. She was a great fortune to her husband, being worth *de claro* above 10,000 *li*.

Guli Springett's fortune, quality and good humour gave her the importunity of many suitors of extraordinary condition e.g. Ld. Brookes [Robert Greville, c. 1638–1676, Baron Brooke] and Ld. J[ohn] Vaughan [1640–1713, Earl of Carbury] etc. but valueing the unity of belief and the selfe deniall of her profession above the glories of the world, she resisted their motions till providence brought a man of Equall condition and fortune to herselfe to the syncere embracing of the said Fayth, whose Mariage has been crowned with a continual Affection.

This is a beautiful picture of early Quaker womanhood, the most detailed remaining from this date; for the Swarthmoor daughters, who moved in rather the same circles, were more countrified, and are generally spoken of as a bevy. We hear of them in a group, with small identical traits peeping out here and there—Sarah's leadership, Margaret's beauty, Mary's delicacy—and so on. But no long, detailed description such as this of Gulielma has been preserved.

And what about her actual features? The picture formerly supposed to be of her is now doubted by experts. John Aubrey's words that she was “The Image of her father, Sir Wm. Springett, in person and qualities” are the only authentic guide. If his bust in Ringmer Church is compared with the so-called portrait of his daughter, each person can decide for himself—or herself—whether they represent the same family countenance.¹ The costume certainly suggests a later date.

The modern reader hankers after more details of the romances hinted at above. Thomas Ellwood, apparently, knew all about them—“For,” he continues, after speaking of Gulielma's numerous suitors:

. . . such as were thus either engaged for themselves, or desirous to make themselves Advocates for others, could not, I

¹ This portrait, however, has been loved and cherished as hers through many generations of Friends. It is therefore inserted in this book. Details about it will be found in Webb (1867) and Hull (1937).

observed, but look upon me with an Eye of Jealousy and Fear, that I would improve the Opportunities I had, by frequent and familiar Conversation with her, to my own Advantage, in working myself into her good Opinion and Favour, to the Ruin of their Pretences.

These jealous suitors and their adherents therefore suggested to Isaac and Mary Penington that Ellwood's Quakerism was but a mask, assumed in order to obtain "so fair a Fortune by thrusting himself amongst that people.

"But those worthy Friends of mine, her Mother and Father-in-Law" (i.e. stepfather) knew too well what the young man had suffered for his change of Faith to listen to this idea. Others, more subtly, suggested that the tutor intended to "steal her, run away with her and marry her" "which they thought I might be more easily induced to do from the advantageous Opportunities I frequently had of riding and walking abroad with her, by Night as well as by Day, without any other Company than her Maid."

This maid of Guli's, of whom mention is occasionally made, was probably Anne Hersent who, later on, married a merchant of Bristol named Thomas Biss. (See page 91.)

For so great indeed was the Confidence that her Mother had in me, that she thought her Daughter safe if I was with her, even from the Plots and Designs that others had upon her. And so honourable were the Thoughts she entertained concerning me, as would not suffer her to admit a Suspicion, that I could be capable of so much Baseness, as to betray the Trust she, with so great Freedom, reposed in me.

Mary Penington's trust was not misplaced. Ellwood confesses in his simple way that he himself was not

ignorant of the various Fears which filled the jealous Heads of some concerning me, neither was I so stupid, nor so divested of all Humanity, as not to be sensible of the real and innate Worth and Virtue which adorned that excellent Dame, and attracted the Eyes and Hearts of so many, with the greatest Importunity to seek and solicit her; nor was I so devoid of natural Heat, as not to feel some Sparklings of Desire as well as others. But the Force of Truth, and Sense of Honour, suppress whatever would

have risen beyond the Bounds of fair and virtuous Friendship. For I easily foresaw, that if I should have attempted anything in a dishonourable Way, by Force or Fraud upon her, I should have thereby brought a Wound upon my own Soul, a foul Scandal upon my religious Profession, and an infamous Stain upon mine Honour; either of which was far more dear unto me than my Life.

Wherefore, having observed how some others had befool'd themselves by misconstruing her common Kindness (expressed in an innocent, open, free and familiar Conversation, springing from the abundant Affability, Courtesy and Sweetness of her natural Temper) to be the effect of a singular Regard and Affection to them, I resolved to shun the Rock on which I had seen so many run and split . . . and . . .

I governed myself in a free, yet respectful Carriage towards her, that I thereby both preserved a fair Reputation with my Friends, and enjoyed as much of her Favour and Kindness, in a virtuous and firm Friendship, as was fit for her to shew, or for me to seek.

This was written in 1663. In 1664 Gulielma seems to have paid a visit to the North of England, only recorded in a sentence of a letter from William Penn (Folio Penn, i, 157) nine years later to Justice Fleming, Deputy Lieutenant of Westmorland. This begins “The Obligation thy Civility laid upon the Person who is now my Wife, when in the North, Anno 1664, is, with her being so, become mine.”

Gulielma's friendship with Margaret Fell, which was to prove such a comfort to her during her husband's long absence in America, may therefore have begun on a visit to Swarthmoor before her marriage at this early date.

Meanwhile, “Thus leading a quiet and contented Life” Ellwood says he found employment in writing

a copy of Verses on one occasion or another, as the Poeticke Vein naturally opened, without taking pains to polish them.

Chapter Two

JOHN MILTON'S FRIEND

“His harmonicall & ingeniose Soule did lodge in a beautiful and well-proportioned body”—AUBREY

INTO this peaceful existence came like a bomb a reverberation from the Quaker Act of 1662. This was, Ellwood says, made against the Quakers by name and more particularly, prohibiting our Meetings under the Sharpest Penalties, of Five Pounds for the first Offence so called, Ten Pounds for the second, and Banishment for the third; under pain of Felony for escaping or returning without Licence.

This Act had been enacted in 1662 in the panic that ensued after the rising of the Fifth Monarchy Men in January 1661/2.

Somewhat later: A certain “well-beloved” Friend of Amersham, Edward Perot or Parret, having died, a number of Friends and neighbours came to attend his funeral there on 1 July 1665, Isaac Penington and Thomas Ellwood among them.

It so happened that one Ambrose Bennett, a Barrister at Law and a Justice of the Peace, . . . riding through the Town that morning, in his Way to Aylesbury, was by some ill-disposed Person or other, informed that there was a Quaker to be buried there that Day, and that most of the Quakers in the Country were come thither to the Burial.

Edward Parret's body was being carried on the shoulders of Friends along the street to the burying ground, “being part of an Orchard belonging to the Deceased, which he in his Lifetime had appointed for that Service.” But the Justice, with “Constables and a Rabble of rude Fellows,” set upon the mourners, the Justice himself taking the coffin from the

bearers' shoulders "so that it fell to the ground in the Midst of the Street, and there we were forced to leave it." The body was afterwards buried in "the unconsecrated Part of that which is called the Churchyard," being forcibly taken "from the Widow whose Right and Property it was," and all the Friends were committed to Aylesbury Gaol, where after some delay they "were by him, without guard, conducted to the Prison. . . ."

Our great Concern was for our Friend Isaac Penington, because of the Tenderness of his Constitution; but he was so lively in his Spirit, and so cheerfully given up to suffer, that he rather encouraged us, than needed any Encouragement from us.

After an imprisonment of more than a month they were set at liberty, Ellwood only for a short time, but in the interval something memorable had happened, for 1665 was of course the year of the Great Plague in London. Ellwood writes:

Some little Time before I went to Aylesbury Prison, I was desired by my quondam Master, Milton, to take an House for him in the Neighbourhood where I dwelt, that he might go out of the City, for the Safety of himself and his Family, the Pestilence then growing hot in London. I took a pretty Box for him in Giles-Chalfont, a Mile from me, of which I gave him Notice, and intended to have waited on him and seen him well settled in it, but was prevented by that Imprisonment.

But now being released and returned home, I soon made a Visit to him, to welcome him into the Country.

After some common Discourses had passed between us, he called for a Manuscript of his; which being brought he delivered to me, bidding me take it home with me, and read it at my Leisure; and when I had so done, return it to him with my Judgment thereupon.

When I came home, and had set myself to read it, I found it was that excellent Poem which he entituled *Paradise Lost*. After I had, with the best Attention, read it through, I made him another Visit, and returned him his Book, with due Acknowledgment of the Favour he had done me in communicating it to me. He asked me, "how I liked it and what I thought of it?" which I modestly but freely told him; and after some further Discourse about it, I pleasantly said to him, "Thou hast said much here of *Paradise Lost* but what hast thou to say of *Paradise Found*?" He made me no Answer, but sate some Time in a

Muse; and then brake off that Discourse, and fell upon another Subject.

After the Sickness was over, and the City well cleansed and become safely habitable again, he returned thither. And when afterwards I went to wait upon him there (which I seldom failed of doing, whenever my Occasions drew me to London) he showed me his second Poem, called *Paradise Regained*; and in a pleasant Tone said to me, "This is owing to you; for you put it into my Head by the Question you put to me at Chalfont; which before I had not thought of." But from this Digression I return to the Family I then lived in.

We had not been long at Home, about a Month perhaps, before Isaac Penington was taken out of his House in an arbitrary manner by military Force, and carried Prisoner to Aylesbury Gaol again, where he lay three-quarters of a Year, with great Hazard of his Life, it being the Sickness Year, and the Plague being not only in the Town but in the Jail.

Meanwhile his Wife and Family were turned out of his House called The Grange at Peter's-Chalfont, by them who had seized upon his Estate.

This is what Mary Penington alludes to in her Journal:

After my dear husband and I had received the truth of God's faithful servants, to the light and grace in the heart, we became obedient to the heavenly voice receiving the truth in the love of it, and took up the cross to the customs, language, friendships, titles and honours of this world; and endured patiently, despisings, reproaches, cruel mockings and scornings, from relations, acquaintances, and neighbours; those of our own rank, and those below us, even our own servants. To every class we were a by-word; they would wag the head at us, accounting us fools, mad, and bewitched. As such, they stoned, abused and imprisoned us, at several towns and meetings where we went. This not being enough to prove us . . . it pleased the Lord to try us by the loss of our estate which was wrongfully held from us, by our relations suing us unrighteously. Our own tenants withheld what the law gave, & put us into the Court of Chancery, because we could not swear. Our relations also taking that advantage, we were put out of our dwelling-house, in an injurious, unrighteous manner. Thus we were stripped of my husband's estate and a great part of mine. After this we were tossed up and down from place to place, to our great weariness and charge. . . .

Ellwood's Journal continues:

The Family being by that means broken up, some went one way, some another. Mary Penington herself, with her younger Children, went down to her Husband at Aylesbury. Guli, with her Maid, went to Bristol to see her former Maid Anne Hersent, who was married to a Merchant of that City, whose name was Thomas Biss, and I went to Aylesbury with the Children; but not finding this Place agreeable to my Health, I soon left it, and returning to Chalfont, took a Lodging and was dieted in the House of a friendly Man; and after some time, went to Bristol to conduct Guli home.

Meanwhile Mary Penington took Lodgings in a Farmhouse called Bottrels, in the Parish of Giles-Chalfont, where, when we returned from Bristol we found her.

We had been there but a very little Time, before I was sent to Prison again.

This was for attending a meeting for worship at a neighbour's house. Ellwood, Gulielma and her maid, with a Welsh Friend, Morgan Watkins, and three London acquaintances of Mary Penington, not Friends, but then on a visit to her,

walked over to that Meeting, it being about the Middle of the first Month, and the Weather good.

Unfortunately the house where the meeting was held was only

about a Mile from the House of Ambrose Bennett the Justice, who the Summer before had sent me and some other Friends to Aylesbury Prison from the Burial of Edward Parret of Amer-sham. [The Justice, hearing that the Quakers were again meeting so near his home] snatched up a Stackwood-stick, big enough to have knock'd any man down, and brought it with him hidden under his Cloak.

Being come to the House, he stood for a while without the Door, and out of Sight, listening to hear what was said, for Morgan was then speaking, in the Meeting.

Hearing Morgan speaking with a strong Welsh accent and not understanding what he said, the Justice leapt to the conclusion that he was a Jesuit and said

That in his Preaching he trolled over his Latin as fluently as

ever he heard any one, whereas Morgan (good man) was better versed in Welsh than in Latin, which I suppose, he had never learned; I am sure he did not understand it.

(The continual suspicion that Quakers and Jesuits were in league together is an interesting subject deserving of further study.)

Hereupon the usual uproar followed, and though the names of all present, including even the non-Friend visitors from London, were taken down, finally only a few Friends were arrested and committed to Aylesbury Gaol. Hearing this, Judith Parker, the London doctor's wife, "overmaster'd the Justice by clear Reason, delivered in fine Language," reminding him that

It was a sickly Time and that the Pestilence was reported to be in that place, and asked him in handsome Terms "how he would answer the Cry of our Blood, if by his sending us to an infected Place, we should lose our Lives there?"

The Justice listened to this plea and sent them instead to the House of Correction at Wycombe.

This was on the 13th day of the Month called March 1665; [and they were] kept close Prisoners there till the 7th Day of the Month called June 1666 which was some days above 12 weeks, and much above what the Act required.

Ellwood, as this was his second imprisonment, was in danger of being banished. He and the Welshman Morgan Watkins were closely confined together, and though not a congenial pair yet we kept a fair and brotherly Correspondence as became Friends, Prison-fellows [charming word!] and Bed-fellows, which we were. And indeed, it was a good Time, I think, to us all. . . .

During my Imprisonment in this Prison, I betook myself for an Employment, to making of Nets for Kitchen-service, to boil Herbs etc. in; which Trade I learned of Morgan Watkins, and selling some, and giving others, I pretty well stocked the Friends of that Country with them.

Discharged from prison, Ellwood went straight back to the Penington family, at "Bottrel's in Chalfont," taking Morgan

Watkins with him, but leaving Isaac Penington still in prison at Aylesbury. Thus Ellwood became the active man of the family, and finding that

the Lodgings we had in this Farm-house (Bottrel's) proving too straight and inconvenient for the Family, I took larger and better Lodgings for them in Berrie House at Amersham, whither we went at the time called Michaelmas, having spent the Summer at the other Place.

The following year, 1667, Ellwood seems to have come into contact for the first time with "that eminent Servant and Prophet of God, George Fox," when memorable meetings were held in London in connection with what is known as the Perrot Controversy. This miserable schism in the Quaker body does not concern us here, except that our old friends Thomas and Anne Curtis were among those who "fell away." Ellwood himself at the beginning "having lived privately in London and had little converse with Friends" was "among the many who were catcht in that Snare," but soon came to see the error of his ways when

That solemn Meeting was appointed at London for a Travail in Spirit on Behalf of Those who had thus gone out, that they might rightly return, and be sensibly received into the Unity of the Body again; my Spirit rejoiced and with Gladness of Heart I went to it, as did many more both of City and Country.

Not long after this, George Fox was moved of the Lord to travel through the Countries, from County to County, to advise and encourage Friends to set up Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, for the better ordering the Affairs of the Church [*N.B.* "The Church"], in taking Care of the Poor, and exercising a true Gospel-discipline, for a due Dealing with any that might walk disorderly under our Name, and to see that such as should Marry among us, did act fairly, and clearly in that Respect.

George Fox's power as a far-seeing statesman was shown in nothing more clearly than in this simple scheme for the welfare of the Society. With the minimum of organization his arrangements have lasted, and lasted well, from that day to this, through the varied trials and tests of nearly three hundred years.

This "Journey under Concern" (to use Quaker language) gave to Ellwood what was doubtless one of the most idyllic periods of his life. For in 1668 when Fox

came into this County [Buckinghamshire] I was one of the many Friends that were with him at the Meeting for that Purpose. And afterwards I travelled with Guli and her Maid, into the West of England to meet him there, and to visit Friends in those parts, and we went as far as Topsham in Devonshire before we found him. He had been in Cornwall [with Loveday Hambly at Tregangeeves] and was then returning, and came in unexpectedly at Topsham, where we then were providing (if he had not there come thither) to have gone that Day towards Cornwall.

Cornish Friends will wish that Ellwood and Gulielma had carried out their first intention and visited just that once, when they were so near, our remote West. But the whole episode illustrates vividly how difficult plan-making must have been in those days before railroads, telegrams or telephones. Only the small groups of Friends, strung out in a line of places that must be visited both in going and returning, made possible these unexpected meetings.

But after he was come to us, we turned back with him through Devonshire, Somersetshire and Dorsetshire, having generally very good Meetings where he was.

Day after day, riding through those beautiful country lanes in the summer weather, Gulielma and Thomas evidently had many opportunities to get to know each other even better than before. Was it then that the "Sparklings of Desire" were finally quenched in the young man's heart? Did George Fox, with his unique power of "seeing into conditions," perceive how things were with them both? Did he counsel Gulielma that it was far better to remain single than to marry without a wholehearted love? Did he advise Thomas to try to tear her from the chief place in his heart, to keep her as a friend, an inspiration, but to find someone else to be the helpmeet in his home?

Questions such as these will arise, but they can never be

answered now. All that remains is the concise statement in Thomas's Journal:

By the time we came back from this Journey, the summer was pretty far gone [and Thomas's summer hopes with it too, perhaps?] and the following Winter I spent with the Children of the Family as before, without any remarkable Alteration in my Circumstances, until the next Spring; when I found in myself a Disposition of mind to change my single Life for a married State.

Chapter Three

A QUAKER COURTSHIP

“Affectionate Kindness in Order to Marriage”

CHARACTERISTICALLY, Thomas Ellwood prefaces the account of his courtship and marriage with a prosy paragraph:

I had always entertained so high a Regard for Marriage, as it was a divine Institution that I held it not lawful to make it a Sort of political Trade to rise in the World by. [He resolved to avoid the Course of regarding] not so much what she is, as what she has [and] never to engage on the Account of Riches, nor at all to marry, till judicious Affection drew me to it, which I now began to feel at Work in my Breast.

The Object of this Affection was a Friend named Mary Ellis [several years older than himself, though he does not mention this] whom for divers years I had had an Acquaintance with, in the way of common Friendship only; and in whom I thought I then saw those fair Prints of Truth and solid Virtue, which I afterwards found in a sublime Degree in her; but what her Condition in the World was, as to Estate, I was wholly a stranger to, nor desired to know.”

(It is difficult not to feel, reading this, “Methinks the gentleman doth protest too much.”)

A year or two before Ellwood had been able to be of use to Mary Ellis in

a small Piece of Service that she wanted some Assistance in, . . . That little Intercourse of Common Kindness between us, ended without the least Thought (I am verily persuaded, on her Part, well assured on my own) of any other or further Relation than that of free and fair Friendship, nor did it, at that Time lead us into any closer Conversation, or more intimate acquaintance one with the other, than had been before. But some Time (and

that a good while) after [in 1669], I found my Heart secretly drawn and inclining towards her; yet was I not hasty in proposing, but waited to feel a satisfactory settlement of Mind therein, before I made any Step thereto.

Was there ever more sedate love-making?—and this, be it remembered, not long after his riding tour in the West with Gulielma. After a while he consulted “my much-honoured Friends Isaac and Mary Penington” on the subject.

They having solemnly weighed the Matter, exprest their unity therewith, and indeed their Approbation thereof was no small Confirmation to me therein.

Yet further “Deliberation” and earnest prayers were necessary before

At length as I was setting alone waiting upon the Lord for Counsel and Guidance in this (in itself and to me) so important Affair, I felt a Word sweetly arise in me as if I had heard a Voice which said “Go and prevail.” And Faith springing in my Heart with the Word, I immediately arose and went, nothing doubting. When I was come to her Lodgings, which were about a Mile from me, her Maid told me she was in her Chamber (for having been under some Indisposition of Body, which had obliged her to keep her Chamber, she had not yet left it). Whereupon I desired the Maid to acquaint her Mistress, that I was come to give her a Visit; whereupon I was invited to go up to her. And after some little Time spent in common Conversation, feeling my Spirit weightily concerned, I solemnly opened my Mind unto her with regard to the particular Business I came about; which I soon perceived was a great Surprisal to her, for she had taken in an Apprehension, as others also had done, that mine Eye had been fixed elsewhere and nearer home.

This last is perhaps the most revealing sentence in the whole demure narrative. The Quakeress was not to be outdone in deliberation by the Quaker. Ellwood desired that she would

in the most solemn Manner weigh the Proposal made, and in due Time give me such an Answer thereunto as the Lord would give her.

To this she consented—Ellwood went on a journey for two

weeks and on his return found that "The Concern" had prospered.

From that Time forwards we entertained each other with affectionate Kindness in order to Marriage; which yet we did not hasten to, but went on deliberately. Neither did I use those vulgar ways of Courtship, by making frequent and rich Presents: not only for that my outward Condition would not comport with the Expence, but because I liked not to obtain by such Means; but preferred an unbribed Affection.

Perhaps the difference between the feeling of honest Thomas for Gulielma and for his wife, Mary Ellis, can be expressed in two modern verses:

I loved her as men love some mountain height,
A dazzling radiancy of snowy white.
I loved her as men love some steadfast star
That guides them home when earthly lights are far.

I love you as men love the lowland places,
The happy valleys with their tranquil farms,
And peaceful meadows, lit with children's faces:
I loved her on my knees, you in my arms.

Chapter Four

A QUAKER ADVENTURE

“Most equal & undaunted in Danger”

THE next chapter in this staid romance is an unexpected one. Mary Penington asked Thomas Ellwood kindly to escort her daughter Gulielma, who in 1669 had to go to her Uncle Springett's in Sussex and from thence among her Tenants—and assist her in her business with her Tenants.¹

Sir William Springett's property, which his daughter had inherited, lay about Ringmer, near Lewes. Herbert Springett, her uncle, lived in the same neighbourhood, at Royle Place, Ringmer. He was a barrister-at-law and, though not a Friend, gave valuable assistance later to his niece and her husband. (Webb and *Camb. Jnl.*)

So Thomas, the suitor of Mary Ellis, had to leave her and resume his former role of squire to Gulielma Springett. The journey turned out to be so adventurous that Thomas must tell it himself (with some abbreviations):

We tarried at London the first Night, and set out next Morning on the Tunbridge Road, and Seven-Oak lying in our Way, we put in there to bait; But truly, we had much ado to get either Provisions or Room for ourselves or our Horses, the House was so filled with Guests, and those not of the better Sort. For the Duke of York being, as we were told, on the Road that Day for the Wells, divers of his Guards, and the meaner sort of his Retinue had near filled all the Inns there.

I left John Gigger² who waited on Guli in this journey, and

¹ See Appendix II.

² Mary Penington in her will in 1682 leaves a garment to Rebecca Jiggour, who may have been his wife. . A marriage certificate written by Thomas Ellwood bears John Gigger's X on it instead of signature. It is the last on the document, and shows that Gulielma's "menial servant" was not an educated man. See *J.F.H.S.*, xxi, 1934, frontispiece. For details of his after-history see Snell.

was afterwards her menial Servant, to take Care for the Horses, while I did the like, as well as I could for her. I got a little Room to put her into, and having shut her into it, went to see what Relief the Kitchen would afford us; and with much ado, by praying hard and paying dear [one of T.E.'s unconscious and spontaneous bits of humour], I got a small Joint of Meat from the Spit, which served rather to stay than satisfy our Stomachs, for we were all pretty sharp set.

After this short Repast, being weary of our Quarters, we quickly mounted and took the Road again, willing to hasten from a Place where we found nothing but Rudeness; for the Roysters, who swarmed there, besides the damning Oaths they belched out at one another, looked very sourly on us, as if they grudged both the Horses we rode and the Cloaths we wore.

A Knot of these soon followed us, designing, as we afterwards found, to put an Abuse upon us, and make themselves Sport with us. We had a Spot of fine smooth sandy Way, whereon the Horses trod so softly, that we heard them not, till one of them was upon us. I was then riding abreast with Guli, and discoursing with her; when on a sudden, hearing a little Noise, and turning mine Eye that Way, I saw an Horseman coming up on the further Side of her Horse, having his left Arm stretched out, just ready to take her about the Waste, and pluck her off backwards from her own horse, to lay her before him on his. I had but just Time to thrust forth my Stick between him and her, and bid him stand off; and at the same Time reigning [*sic*] my Horse, to let hers go before me, thrust in between her and him, and being better mounted than he my Horse run him off. But his Horse being (tho' weaker than mine, yet) nimble, he slipt by me, and got up to her on the near Side, endeavouring to offer Abuse to her. To prevent which, I thrust in upon him again, and in our jostling, we drove her Horse quite out of the Way, and almost into the next Hedge.

While we were thus contending, I heard a Noise of loud Laughter behind us, and turning my Head that Way, I saw three or four Horse-men more, who could scarce sit their Horses for laughing, to see the Sport their Companion made with us. From thence I saw it was a Plot laid, and that this rude Fellow was not to be dallied with; wherefore I bestirr'd myself the more to keep him off, admonishing him to take Warning in Time, and give over his Abusiveness, lest he repented too late. He had in his Hand a short thick Truncheon, which he held up at me; on which laying hold with a strong

Gripe, I suddenly wrenched it out of his Hand, and threw it at as far a Distance behind me as I could.

While he rode back to fetch his Truncheon, I called up honest John Gigger, who was indeed, a right honest Man, and of a Temper so thoroughly peaceable, that he had not hitherto put in at all. But now I roused him, and bid him ride so close up to his Mistress's Horse on the further side, that no Horse might thrust in between. But he, good Man, not thinking it perhaps, decent enough for him to ride so near his Mistress, left room enough for another to ride between. And indeed so soon as our Brute had recovered his Truncheon, he came up directly thither, and had thrust in again, had not I, by a nimble Turn, chopt in upon him and kept him at a Bay.

I then told him, I had hitherto spared him; but wish'd him not to provoke me further. This I spoke with such a Tone, as bespoke an high Resentment of the Abuse put upon us, and withal pressed so close upon him with my Horse, that I suffered him not to come up any more to Guli.

This his Companions, who kept an equal Distance behind us, both heard and saw, and thereupon two of them advancing, came up to us. I then thought I might likely have my Hands full, but Providence turn'd it otherwise. For they, seeing the Contest rise so high, and probably fearing it would rise higher, not knowing where it might stop, came in to part us; which they did, by taking him away, one of them leading his Horse by the Bridle, and the other driving him on with his Whip, and so carried him off.

One of their Company staid yet behind. And it so happening that a great Shower just then fell, we betook ourselves for shelter to a thick and well-spread Oak, which stood hard by. Thither also came that other Person, who wore the Duke's Livery, and while we put on our defensive garments against the Weather, which then set in to be wet, he took the opportunity to discourse with me about the Man that had been so rude to us, endeavouring to excuse him by alledging that "he had drunk a little too liberally." I let him know, that one Vice would not excuse another; that although but one of them was actually concerned in the Abuse, both he and the rest of them were Abettors of it, and Accessories to it; that I was not ignorant whose Livery they wore and was well assured, their Lord would not maintain them in comitting such outrages upon Travellers on the Road, to our Injury and his Dishonour, that I understood the Duke was coming down, and that they might expect to be called to an Account for this rude Action.

He then begg'd hard that we would pass by the Offence, and make no Complaint to their Lord; for he knew, he said, that "the Duke would be very severe, and it would be the utter Ruin of the young man." When he had said what he could, he went off before us, without any ground given him to expect Favour; and when we had fitted ourselves for the weather, we folloed after at our own pace. . . .

I wonder what sort of wet-weather garments these were? Long before the days of Macintosh or Burberry. Could these be the "Spatterdashes" eighteenth-century Friends are mentioned as wearing on their journeys?¹

When we came to Tunbridge, I set John Gigger foremost, bidding him lead on briskly through the Town and placing Guli in the Middle, I came up close after her, that I might both observe, and interpose, if any fresh Abuse should have been offered her. We were expected, I perceived; for though it rained very hard, the Street was thronged with Men, who looked very earnestly on us, but did not put any Affront upon us.

We had a good way to ride beyond Tunbridge, and beyond the Wells, in By-ways among the Woods, and were the later for Hinderance we had had on the way. And when, being come to Harbert Springett's House, Guli acquainted her Uncle what Trouble and Danger she had gone through on the Way, he resented it so high, that he would have had the Persons been prosecuted for it. But, since Providence had interposed, and so well preserved and delivered her, she chose to pass by the Offence.

When Guli had finished the Business she went upon, we returned home and I delivered her to her glad Mother.

William Penn wrote of his wife many years later that she was "most equal and undaunted in danger." She had need of these equable spirits on this adventurous ride.

From that time forward, I continued my Visits to my best-beloved Friend [Mary Ellis] until we married, which was on

¹ Amelia Gummere in *The Quaker: a Study in Costume* (p. 153), says: "No costume was more important for the Quaker woman of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than that designed for use on horseback. . . . Country Friends had to ride everywhere, and a woman . . . if she travelled at all, must of necessity be a good horsewoman. The riding hood, with cape or long cloak attached, was worn over the ordinary dress, the skirt of which was often protected by a 'safe-guard' . . . an outside petticoat of heavy linen or woollen stuff, worn over other skirts to protect them from mud in riding on horseback."

the 28th Day of the 8th Month (called October) in the Year 1669. We took each other in a select Meeting, of the ancient and grave Friends of that Country, holden in a Friend's House . . . a very solemn Meeting it was, and in a weighty Frame of Spirit we were, in which we sensibly felt the Lord with us and joining us, the sense whereof remained with us all our Lifetime, and was of good Service, and very comfortable to us on all Occasions.

Even after Thomas Ellwood's marriage he still retained his intimate footing in the Penington family and was appealed to by them for help in their difficulties. He writes, in 1669/70:

I had not been long married, before I was solicited by my dear Friends Isaac and Mary Penington, and her daughter Guli, to take a Journey into Kent and Sussex, to accompt with their Tenants and overlook their Estates in those Counties, which, before I was married, I had had the Care of: and accordingly the journey I undertook, though in the Depth of Winter.

My Travels into those parts were the more irksome to me, from the Solitariness I underwent, and Want of suitable Society. . . . Having finished my Business in Kent, I struck off into Sussex. . . . As soon as I had dispatcht the Business I went about, I returned home without Delay, and to my great Comfort found my Wife well, and myself very Welcome to her; both which I esteemed as great Favours. Towards the latter Part of the Summer following [1670], I went into Kent again, and in my Passage through London, received the unwelcome news of the Loss of a very hopeful Youth who had before been under my Care for Education. It was Isaac Penington (the second son of my worthy Friends Isaac and Mary Penington) a Child of excellent natural Parts, whose great Abilities bespoke him likely to be a great Man, had he lived to be a Man. He was designed to be bred a Merchant, and before he was thought ripe enough to be entred thereunto his parents, at Somebody's Request, gave Leave that he might go a Voyage to Barbadoes, only to spend a little Time, see the Place, and be somewhat acquainted with the Sea, under the care of a choice Friend and Sailor, John Grove of London, who was Master of a Vessel, and traded to that Island; and a little Venture he had with him, made up of divers of his Friends, and by me among the rest. He made the Voyage thither very well, found the wat'ry Element agreeable, had his health there, liked the Place, was much pleased with his Entertainment there, and was returning

home with his little Cargo, in Return for the Goods he carried out; when on a sudden, through Unwariness, he dropt overboard, and (the Vessel being under Sail with a brisk Gale) was irrecoverably lost, notwithstanding the utmost Labour, Care and Diligence of the Master and Sailors to have saved him.

This unhappy Accident took from the afflicted Master all the pleasure of his Voyage, and he mourned for the Loss of this Youth, as if it had been his own, yea, only Son; for as he was in himself a Man of a worthy Mind, so the Boy, by his witty and handsome Behaviour in general, and obsequious Carriage towards him in particular, had very much wrought himself into his Favour.

As for me, I thought it one of the sharpest Strokes I had met with, for I both loved the Child very well, and had conceived great Hopes of general Good from him; and it pierced me the deeper to think how deeply it would pierce his afflicted Parents.

The usual elegy followed from Thomas, of which a copy was “inclosed in a Letter of Condolence” and

sent by the first Post into Buckinghamshire, to my dear Friends the afflicted Parents; and upon my Return home, going to visit them, we sate down and solemnly mixed our Sorrows and Tears together.

Mary Penington in her earlier Journal never mentions the death of her first-born son, John Springett. Perhaps it is characteristic that in her later account, written for her grandson, Springett Penn, in 1680, ten years after this event, she never mentions her son Isaac's death, either. Yet the loss of this “witty and handsome boy” of eighteen must have been a grievous sorrow both to his parents and to his stepsister Gulielma. Notice the reference to the young man's “wit”; an inheritance doubtless from his “witty” father. And notice also how the meaning of “obsequious” has changed since that time. Here it evidently has no implication of cringing, but is a wholly favourable trait.

In spite of the grief it must have brought to Gulielma, this sorrow would perhaps hardly need more than a passing mention in an account of her life, were it not that it has a special interest, because it is connected with a well-known incident of English

history. The mate of the ship on which young Isaac was voyaging was also a Friend, by name Richard Carver. He, when a young man, had carried Charles II ashore on his back on his landing in France in 1651. This appears from a letter written by Ellis Hookes to Margaret Fox from London, which is worth transcribing. The letter is dated “16th of 11th mo. 1669” [January 1670], a few months after her marriage to George Fox, and a few months before the accident to young Isaac.

Yesterday there was a Friend with the king, one that is John Grove's mate: He was the man that was mate to the master of the fisher-boat that carried the King away, when he went from Worcester fight; and only this Friend and the master knew of it in the ship: and the Friend carried him ashore on his shoulders. The king knew him again and was very friendly to him; and told him he remembered him, and of several things that was done in the ship at the same time. The Friend told him, the reason why he did not come [forward] all this while was, that he was satisfied, in that he had peace and satisfaction in himself, that he did what he did to relieve a man in distress; and now he desired nothing of him, but that he would set Friends at liberty, who were great sufferers . . . and told the King that he had a *pay* [list] of 110 that were praemunired, that have lain in prison about six years, and none can release them but him. So the King took the paper,—and said that there was many of them and that they would be in again in a month's time; and that the country gentlemen complained to him, that they were so troubled with the Quakers. So he said, he would release him six: but the Friend thinks to go to him again, for he had not fully relieved himself. (Swarthmore MSS., i, 50.)

This letter is endorsed in George Fox's own hand: “e hookes to m ff of paseges consarning Richard Carver that carred the king of [on] his backe.”

The King's own account of this escape “as dictated to S. Pepys” is to be found in “*The Boscobel Tracts* relating to the escape of Charles II after the battle of Worcester.” (Republished in 1830.) Richard Carver is not mentioned by name, only that “the tide failing us we were forced to come to anchor within two miles from the shore till the tide of flood was done.” This

was just before "an harbour in France called Fescamp." But a suspicious vessel following, whom they suspected to be an Ostend privateer, hurried matters, and at the King's own suggestion they made for the shore "in a little cock-boat." This suggests that the king was carried ashore, as usual, from it on the shoulders of a Friend, whose name George Fox gives us, namely Richard Carver.

After this we lose for a time the company of Ellwood's Journal.

He goes on to speak of his own concerns and doings, and there is no further mention of Gulielma for fourteen years. Only her marriage certificate in his handwriting still exists.

The following year, 1670, he does mention William Penn for the first time, as attending a public meeting at Wycombe. No details are given concerning him. There is not a syllable about his engagement or marriage to Gulielma; though, curiously enough, Thomas and Mary Ellwood were the two Friends appointed by their Monthly Meeting to visit William and Gulielma, to ascertain that they both were "clear of other engagements," before their marriage in 1672.

For all his "pedagogic prolixity," Thomas Ellwood knew how and when to keep silence. This silence of his, lasting for many years, speaks louder than many words. Until at length Gulielma, ill and unhappy during her husband's absence in America, asked for his help. Then when she needed him, he, as ever her true knight, sprang to obey her summons. What this cost him will be told later.

Meanwhile our concern is with William Penn, who comes thus suddenly on the scene and apparently carries all before him.

BOOK FIVE

WILLIAM

“ *The greatest Historic Figure of his Age* ”—LORD ACTON

Chapter One

EARLY DAYS

“As a Child Alone”

ADMIRAL SIR WILLIAM PENN and Alderman Isaac Penington were both of them distinguished citizens of London. Each had a home in the city itself and also a country mansion at Chigwell in Essex. Yet the two families moved in different worlds. The Peningtons' home was literary and cultured, with religious interests. The Admiral's was blown through by breezes from the sea. Naval and military matters were its chief concern.

These two homes, standing near together in London and in Essex, yet each with its own characteristic atmosphere, were in later years to be united by similar experiences both of joy and sorrow. Both the Alderman and the Admiral were to undergo the same distress, one after the other, of seeing an adored and brilliant son throw away all his dazzling prospects in life in order to join the despised Quakers.

Young Isaac Penington's years of distressful seeking had endured through the late 1640's and the early 1650's: the trials of the Admiral's son did not begin until ten years later, in his young manhood.

William Penn was born “at 7 o'clock on a Monday morning,” 14 October 1644, three months after the battle of Marston Moor had practically ensured the triumph of Oliver Cromwell over Charles I in the Civil War.

The birth took place in St. Olave's Street “within the Liberty of the Tower of London and near the ancient London Wall.” The nine-days-old baby was christened and given the name of William in the neighbouring church of All Hallows,

Barking, "the Mariners' mediaeval Church, still standing at the foot of Great Tower Street." (Badly bombed, December 1940.)

Its Parish Register devotes one line to the infant's baptism: "23. william sonn of william pen and margaret his wife of the Tower Liberty." "The name given to him was that of his father, his great-grandfather, his great-great-grandfather; and it was handed on to numerous generations of his own descendants." (Hull, pp. 65-6.)

In the Great Fire of London in 1665 the dial and part of the porch of this church was burned. The rest of the building had a very narrow escape. But it was saved "by the workmen out of the King's Navy Yards, sent up by Sir William penn," Pepys writes on 5 September 1666.

Almost immediately after the christening, the baby's father of twenty-three years of age, "a newly-commissioned young naval officer under the Parliament," "Faire Haired and of a Comely Round Visage," was off to the wars once more.

A few months earlier in this same year, 1644, another babe, a girl, had been born down in Kent, who, without any outward baptism, had been given the name of Gulielma Maria Springett. She was in after years to become the wife of William Penn. But though this little damsel may have visited the home of Isaac Penington, senior, at Chigwell, after he had become her step-grandfather, there is no record that the future lovers ever met in their childhood, or even knew of each other's existence. The years keep their secrets well. They give no hint of their intentions until the fulness of time shall come.

At the age of three, young William Penn suffered from a severe attack of smallpox, during which, though he recovered from it, he lost all his hair. This attack of smallpox in infancy may have saved him in later life when again exposed to the same disease. The change from London into the country air of Essex may have been undertaken to hasten his recovery, for it was when the boy was between three and four years old that his father bought the house at Chigwell "to be the family's home while he was so much at sea."

Here William spent his early boyhood, largely in the care of

his mother, formerly Margaret van der Schuren (*née* Jasper), to whom he was devoted. Here, some years later, first his sister Margaret and then his brother Richard were added to the family party. Here he was sent to be educated at the Free Grammar School at Chigwell, founded twenty-five years earlier, which still exists.

It was one of the many free schools that sprang up in the post-Elizabethan, Puritan age, its founder being Dr. Samuel Harsnett [1561–1631], for eight years Vicar of Chigwell, and later Archbishop of York. (Hull, p. 67.)

He said deliberately of his intentions: "We may not be able to teach much, but we build up character." Yet the periods of study were both long and strenuous.

The scholars worked for eight hours in winter and for ten in summer. One hour in each week was allowed for play, on Thursdays and Saturdays, and only three short holidays were given in the whole year, a few days at Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide. (Yet even this was "a humane provision . . . nearly two centuries in advance of the times." Brailsford.)

In the English School were taught writing ("fair secretary and Roman hands"); cyphering and accounting; and such reading as would improve the pupils' manners and morals. "I charge my schoolmasters respectively," wrote the founder, "as they will answer it to God and good men, that they bring up their scholars in the fear of God and reverence toward all men; and that they teach them obedience to their parents, observance to their betters, gentleness and ingenuity in all their carriages; and above all that they chastise them severely for three vices—lying, swearing and filthy speaking."

In the Latin school were taught the usual Greek, Latin and mathematics . . . the writing of Latin was to be modelled on the styles of "no other than Tully and Terence"; and "no novelties nor conceited modern writers" were to be tolerated. (Hull, p. 68.)

And this with Shakespeare not long dead and Milton's poems still being published! It may explain why no English poets except Chaucer and Cowley are quoted in all Penn's voluminous works though he is fond of exhibiting his knowledge of classical authors. Even of "Honest Chaucer," he

admits, "whose matter (and not his poetry) strongly affects me." (Folio Penn.)

Penn's school days were punctuated by the violent ups and downs in his father's fortunes. In 1653 the Admiral returned in triumph from a great victory over the Dutch Fleet, to be fêted together with the three famous land generals, Blake, Monk and Desborough, given a gold chain worth £100 and also made a General in the Army, "the only seaman ever to be honoured with that title." Then, only a year or two later, returning after the expedition to Jamaica, and although he had added that island to the possessions of the British Crown, he was disgraced and sent to the Tower for five weeks in the autumn of 1655. These vicissitudes must have been soul-shaking to an affectionate, sensitive boy, passionately devoted to his father. Even before them, on "Black Monday," 29 March 1652, when only seven years old, young William had lived through the terrifying eclipse "when at 9 a.m. the sun was blotted out of the heavens and all England was in darkness." "The fearfulest eclipse ever seen by mankind." (Carlyle, quoted in Brailsford.) In 1656, moreover, he had an experience that he described many years later, in Holland, as follows:

I began to let them know how and when the Lord first appeared unto me, which was about the 12th year of my age, 1656, at times between then and fifteen the Lord visited me and gave me divine Impressions of himself.

John Aubrey, Penn's contemporary, expands this in his *Brief Lives*, saying of Penn as a schoolboy:

He was mighty lively, but with innocence; and extremely tender under rebuke; and very early delighted in retirement; much given to reading and meditating of the scriptures, and at 14 had marked over the Bible, oftentimes at 13 and 14 ravisht with joy and dissolved into tears in his meditations.

The first sense he had of God was when he was 11 yeares old at Chigwell, being retired in a chamber alone. He was so suddenly surprized with an inward comfort and (as he thought) an externall glory in the roome that he has many times sayd that from thence he had a seale of divinity and immortality, that

there was a God and that the soule of man was capable of enjoying his divine communications.

“His schoolmaster,” Aubrey adds dryly, “was not of his persuasion.”

Dr. Hull says that such experiences among young children were by no means uncommon among youths of his age and period. . . . Whatever its origin and exact character, it played its part in making the “life of the spirit” an enduring reality, and in causing him to dedicate himself to working for what he believed to be God’s will in God’s kingdom on earth. (Hull, pp. 71–2.)

This vision was not perhaps wholly unlike those mentioned in the Old Testament as happening in childhood or early youth to Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others. As Evelyn Underhill writes:

The light comes, when it does come, rather suddenly and strangely. . . . Sooner or later you will “see,” if only for a moment, but no one can anticipate that moment. It comes when one least expects it. It does not last, but the certainty it conveys does last. (*Letters of Evelyn Underhill*, p. 58.)

The story of William Penn’s youthful days has been told too often to need re-telling. Only the most important events need be chronicled here, in order to show what sort of boyhood went to make the man who was able to win the heart of Gulielma.

After leaving Chigwell School he went with his family to their Irish home at Macroom, his father being at that time still in disgrace and banished. This first sojourn in Ireland was made memorable by his first meeting with Thomas Loe, the Quaker. Of this his own account, many years later, is as follows:

He said, while he was but a child, living at Cork with his father, Thomas Loe came thither. When it was rumoured that a Quaker was come from England, his father proposed to some others to be like the Noble Bereans, to hear him before they judged him. He accordingly sent to Thomas Loe to come to his house where he had a meeting in the family. Though William was very young, he observed what effect Thomas Loe’s preaching had on the hearers. A black servant of his father’s

could not refrain from weeping aloud; and looking on his father, he saw the tears running down his cheeks also. He [little William] then thought within himself "What if they would all be Quakers?" This opportunity he never quite forgot—the remembrance of it still recurring at times. (Webb, and see *Jnl.F.H.S.*, xxxii, 22.)

Loe, before becoming a Quaker, had been a hosier of Oxford. He is described in *F.P.T.* as "a laick, an Oxford tradesman, connected with the University." Like that other Thomas, Thomas Curtis of Reading, Loe's place in Quaker history depends not on himself but on the work that was done through him. As Thomas Curtis "convinced" Loveday Hambly in the far West of England so Loe was eventually to be the means of bringing William Penn to the Quaker fold. That time, however, was still far in the future. A description of Loe, in this same year, 1655, remains in an undated letter from Edward Burrough to Margaret Fell, endorsed by George Fox himself with the date "1655." First Burrough, although he was called "a son of thunder," gives a touching description of his own loneliness in Ireland after the departure of his chosen companion, Francis Howgill:

Our parting was a heavy burden upon us both, especially in this strange nation; but we saw it to be of God, and we bore the cross of it. As thou hast opportunity, write to us, it will make me glad; one face of a Friend would rejoice my soul.

Then follows a postscript in quite a different key:

Here is a Friend come from England since I wrote this, from Oxford, who saith he was moved to come, & I believe it. I am refreshed by him. (A.R.B., pp. 263-4.)

There seems good reason to suppose that this unnamed Friend and bringer of cheer was Thomas Loe.

This first meeting with Thomas Loe must have strengthened the impression left on Penn's mind by the "vision" at Chigwell School not long before. "During the next three years," he says, "the Lord visited me and gave me divine Impressions of himself."

Penn's education at this time seems to have been carried on by private tutors, but in 1660, with the Restoration, the tide turned. The Admiral was high in Court favour once more. "He even received knighthood as a reward for his help to the Stuart cause." (Myers.) "And straightway sent his son to Oxford and entered him as a gentleman-commoner at Christchurch, where he was matriculated as the son of a knight."

The young William was described as a "Youth of an excellent Genius," having made such early "improvements in Literature" that he was "matriculated as a gentleman-commoner at Christchurch."

Dr. Hull says:

Now, his father might be assured, he was taking rank as an aristocrat among other aristocrats in a very aristocratic environment. But the Stuart régime was bent on making the college High Church Anglican, as well as aristocratic, and ordered the chapel organ to be returned, the surplice to be worn again by dons and students at chapel services, and the Prayer-book to be restored in place of extemporaneous sermons. These formalistic measures went against the grain of youths who had accepted whole-heartedly the ideals of the Puritan régime. . . . Penn was one of the non-conformist students who absented themselves from chapel exercises, held meetings of their own for prayer and exhortation and rode out into the suburbs to listen to Dr. Owen, the former Dean of Christ Church and vice-chancellor of the University, who had just been dismissed for his dissenting views. (Hull, p. 73.)

In his first published pamphlet Penn denounced the English Universities as "Signal Places for Idleness, Looseness, Prophaneness, Prodigality and Gross Ignorance," while in later life he gave thanks that God had sustained him "in the midst of that Hellish Darkness and Debauchery." His language as a controversial pamphleteer certainly did not lack force at any age of life.

Nevertheless he seems to have made good progress in his studies and also to have "delighted much in manly sport at times of recreation." (Myers.) Soon after coming up and while already a freshman he was proficient enough to write an

Elegy, both in Latin and English verse, on the death of Charles II's younger brother, the Duke of Gloucester.

In the spring of 1661 Admiral Penn took his son up with him to London to be present at the Coronation of Charles II.

Samuel Pepys records in his *Diary*:

21st April 1661. In the morning we were troubled to hear it rain, as it did, because of the great show tomorrow. Dined with Dr. Thomas Pepys and Dr. Fayrebrother; and all our talk about tomorrow's show, and our trouble that it is like to be a wet day. All the way is so thronged with people to see the triumphall arches, that I could hardly pass for them. . . .

22d. The King's going from the Tower to Whitehall. Up early and made myself as fine as I could, and put on my velvet coat, the first day that I put it on, though made half a year ago. And being ready, Sir W. Batten, my Lady and his two daughters, and his son and wife, Sir W. Pen & his son and I, went to Mr. Young's, the flag-maker, in Cornehill; and there we had a good room to ourselves, with wine and good cake, and saw the show very well. In which it is impossible to relate the glory of this day, expressed in the clothes of them that rid, and their horses and horse-cloths. Among others, my Lord Sandwich's embroidery and diamonds were not ordinary amongst them. . . . My Lord Monk rode bare after the King, and led in his hand a spare horse, as being Master of the Horse. The King, in a most rich embroidered suit and cloak, looked most noble. Wadlow, the vintner, at the Devil, in Fleet Street did lead a fine company of soldiers, all young, comely men in white doublets. . . . The streets all gravelled, and the houses hung with carpets before them, made brave show, and the ladies out of the windows. So glorious was the show with gold and silver, that we were not able to look at it, our eyes at last being so much overcome. Both the King and the Duke of York took notice of us, as they saw us at the window. In the evening, by water to White Hall, to my Lord's and there I spoke with my Lord. He talked to me about his suit, which was made in France, and cost him £200, so rich it is with embroidery. The show being ended, Mr. Young did give us a dinner at which we were very merry, and pleased above imagination at what we had seen. . . . So home, where Will and the boy staid, and saw the show upon Tower-hill. . . .

This quotation shows the kind of life that was opening before the young Penn already during his undergraduate days. In

spite of its allurements he began at once with a group of his friends at Oxford to "hold meetings for exhortation and prayer withdrawing from the national way of worship." John William Graham, in his *William Penn*, thinks this was partly the result of an open-air meeting "held by his old friend and acquaintance Thomas Loe," which attracted the boy undergraduate whose "spirit chimed at once with the Quaker doctrine of the Inward Light." But though Thomas Loe was undoubtedly at Oxford during Penn's collegiate life, no contemporary record remains of any intercourse at this time between them.

Penn's decisive meeting with Thomas Loe did not take place till several years after this; but in later life, on the other side of the Atlantic, Penn revealed that even as an undergraduate at Oxford, in 1661, he had had "an opening of joy as to these parts" (America). What first caused this "opening" towards the far west, nothing remains to show.

Meanwhile even at seventeen he was already being fined at Oxford for his non-conformity. A year later he was expelled from the University "for being religious in too original a way." On his arrival at home, after this disgrace, the Admiral at first seemed to sympathize and almost to agree with his position, but, as he came to realize more what was involved in this independence of thought, he actually chastised his son and finally turned him out of his house.

William says himself, recalling this time:

Bitter usage I underwent when I returned to my father, whipping, beating and turning out of doors in 1662.

Possibly the passing of the Conventicle Act in May of this year and also the Act of Uniformity, both of them tightening up the laws against dissenters and increasing the punishments for disobedience, may have inflamed the Admiral's anger against his son. Be that as it may, the storm did not at this time last very long; he determined to try what change of scene would do to divert the young man's thoughts,

planning to divest his son of his whims and megrims and of continuing his interrupted education by sending him forth upon the Grand Tour. (Hull, p. 79.)

This was to include a journey through France, Switzerland and Italy and home by way of Germany “in company with some persons of quality.” Before the tour, however, William was recalled by his father and sent to Paris, where

the young English aristocrats were introduced at the Court of Louis XIV, then a gallant young sovereign half-a-dozen years Penn’s senior . . . [and where Court life and] Parisian gaiety gradually overcame his nonconformist gravity. (Hull, p. 80.)

He even learned the art of duelling and related in after life that

I was myself once in France, which was before I professed the [Quaker] communion I am now of, set upon about Eleven at Night as I was walking to my Lodging, by a Person that Waylaid me, with his Naked Sword in his hand, who demanded Satisfaction of me for taking no notice of him, at a Time when he civilly saluted me with his Hat; though the Truth was, I saw him not when he did it. I will suppose he had kill’d me or I in my defence had kill’d him, when I disarmed him. . . . I ask any Man of Understanding or Conscience if the whole Ceremony were worth the Life of a Man?¹

After four months at Paris, Penn was sent to the Huguenot College at Saumur, then presided over by the eminent Protestant divine, Moïse Amyraut. Under him, Penn studied the Bible and the Fathers both in Greek and Latin. On the death of Amyraut in 1664 the interrupted Grand Tour was resumed. Penn visited Italy in company with Robert Spencer, Earl of Sunderland. But on reaching Turin a letter from his father summoned him home, and again he promptly obeyed. The extent of paternal authority over a full-grown son is amazing to our modern ideas. Janney explains the recall by saying “it was in order to take charge of his affairs during the Admiral’s absence at sea.” This makes it seem more reasonable.

¹ *No Cross, No Crown.*

Chapter Two

YOUTH

“A most modish Person”—PEPYS’S DIARY

ON his return from his foreign travels Penn was welcomed with enthusiasm by his family and friends, who were impressed by “his Blooming Youth” and “his lively and active disposition.” (Myers.)

On 26 August 1664, Pepys writes:

This day my wife tells me that mr Pen, Sir William’s son is come back from France, and come to visit her.

A few days later Penn called on the diarist himself, who records:

He stayed an hour talking with me. I perceive something of learning he hath got but a great deale, if not too much, of the vanity of the French garbe and affected manner of speech and gait. I fear all real profit he hath of his travel will signify little.

Again a year later, 5 September 1665:

Home pretty betimes and there found W. Pen and he staid supper with us and mighty merry talking of his travels and the french humours etc. and so parted.

More than forty years later, one of the Admiral’s old sailors¹ wrote to Penn:

I remember your honour well, when you came out of France and wore pantaloon breeches.

About this time Admiral Penn put to sea again, practically as commander of the English Fleet.

Penn was among the many young courtiers who went on board seeking excitement, fame and fortune. His father and the

¹ P. Gibson. See Hull, p. 83.

Duke of York singled him out to carry personal letters to the King and despatches to the Secretary of State.

An extant letter from Penn to his father written from the Navy Office on 6 May 1665 recalls how:

On my arrival at Harwich . . . I took post for London . . . and I hasted to Whitehall, where, not finding the king up, I presented myself to my Lord of Arlington and Colonel Ashburnham. At his majesty's knocking, he was informed there was an express from the duke; at which, earnestly skipping out of his bed, he came only in his gown and slippers; who, when he saw me, said "oh is it you? How is Sir William?" He asked how you did three several times. . . . After interrogating me above half an hour, he bid me go now about your business and mine too . . . and so dismissed me. (Quoted in Hull, p. 85.)

This was a month before the "Battle of the 3rd of June" off Lowestoft. But by this time Penn's varied career had taken another turn and he had become a law student at Lincoln's Inn. Here he spent a full year, in a course of legal training that was to serve him well in after years.

"The Dutch War, like most other wars in history was accompanied by Pestilence, which was called in England the Great Plague." Twelve years later in a discourse Penn spoke feelingly, "and that with great reverence and brokenness of Spirit," of the Lord's dealings with him

in the time of the Great Plague in London, [of] the deep sense he gave me of the Vanity of this World, of the Irreligiousness of the Religions of it; of my Mournful & Bitter Cries to him that he would show me his own way of Life and Salvation, and my Resolutions to follow him whatever Reproaches or Sufferings should attend me.

All through these early years there seem to have been two selves battling within Penn: the mystic and the courtier; sometimes one, sometimes the other having the upper hand. When, early in June 1665, the news of the victory over the Dutch Fleet came to hand, Pepys writes sardonically that all the Admiral's family were "not a little puffed up." Yet it was in that same June that the Plague began its fierce visitation. The Admiral was away at sea with the fleet. Lady Penn, with her

daughter, Margaret (the "Pegg Pen" of Pepys), eight years younger than William, stayed on in the city. Almost miraculously, the whole family escaped unharmed. It has been suggested that their abstemious way of living which Pepys mocked at as "niggardly" may have had something to do with this good fortune. Anyhow, William must have become only too familiar with the ghastly sounds and sights of those terrible days when one out of every seven of the citizens of London is said to have perished. He must have often seen the red cross and the words "Lord have mercy upon us" scrawled in red chalk on the doors of stricken houses, and listened to the cry of "Bring out your dead" as the death-cart passed through the streets at night accompanied by a man ringing a bell.

The King and his courtiers had fled for safety to Hampton Court. The Parliament sat at Oxford. Many of the clergy also rushed into the country, but "when the pulpits of the Established Church were left empty by their rectors the Non-Conformist ministers and preachers stepped in and preached from them." And the Quakers stayed,

still holding their meetings openly, going from house to house visiting the sick at home and in the prisons so that they were called by some "the Angels of the Plague."

Yet the Conventicle Act was sternly enforced against them. Dr. Hull says:

A thousand Quakers died of the plague, and two thousand were at one time in London's prisons; while their transportation to Jamaica was demanded by the populace, because their blasphemies had brought on the plague from an offended God!

It is not known whether the young William, going steadily on with his law studies at Lincoln's Inn, came in contact with any Quakers at this period, but he can hardly have escaped hearing about them. The sights and sounds he witnessed so affected his sensitive nature that his father evidently thought it wise to send him away from the tragic city. He therefore encouraged his son to go to Ireland to visit the family property.

there and also to appear at the vice-regal court of the Admiral's old friend, the Duke of Ormonde.

Here he was

esteemed by all . . . a very pretty young Gentleman, a courteous pleasant companion. (Quoted by Myers, p. 32.)

This eventful visit hardly concerns us here except that it gave William Penn a short experience of active service as a soldier. Of this a trophy remains in the traditional portrait of him as a young man aged twenty-two in armour. Yet, in spite of his military appearance, his face is wistful and sensitive and has a yearning look. A distinguished career in Ireland seemed opening before him when he was recalled by his father to London. He arrived in time to be present at his sister's marriage to Anthony Lowther, the simplicity of which disgusted Samuel Pepys:

No friends but two or three relations of his [the groom's] and hers. Borrowed many things of my kitchen for dressing the dinner. (*Diary*, 15 February 1667.)

But surely, after the recent experiences of the plague, and with evidences of the Great Fire, and the misery following upon it, to be seen on every side, this simplicity was in far better taste (to put it at the lowest) than any lavish show? Soon after the wedding William returned to Ireland and there his whole life was altered by his meeting with Thomas Loe. Loe felt it right to share the sufferings of Friends in Ireland. In a letter to George Fox (1660) he says "the thing has oft run through me—thou must travel through this storm with Friends here."

Chapter Three

CONVINCEMENT

“No Cross, No Crown”

THE story of William's convincement is recorded in an ancient manuscript.¹

From this the account of the earlier meeting with Thomas Loe has already been quoted.

It continues:

Afterward, he was sent to Oxford where continued till he was expell'd for writing a book ye Priests did not like then was sent to France to prosecute his Learning & when return'd came to Ireland his Father not being there then he wanting some Cloaths went to a woman Friend Shop he had knowledge of about the time of that Meeting—

She not knowing him, told her who he was and also of the Meeting at his Fathers she admired at his remembering that he told her he should never forget it also if he knew where the person was if 'twere an Hundred Miles he would go to here him again. She told he need not go far for the Friend was lately come thither and would be at meeting the next day to wch he went another appearing first he was not Effectuated with his Testimony but when T.L. stood up was exceedingly reach'd so that he wept much and it seemed to him as if a Voice sayd stand on thy feet How dost know but somebody may be reach'd by thy tears so he stood up that he might be seen. After the Meeting some friends took notice of him and he went to a friend house with T.L. in discourse T.L. was saying he should want a horse either being without one or his own not being fit to travell, W.P. offer'd him his Sumture horse he had brought from France but T.L. said he was not willing to take his, wch made W.P. think he was not friend enough to have his horse accepted.

¹ Now in the possession of the Reference Library at Friends House, London, and published in *Jnl.F.H.S.*, xxxii, pp. 22 ff.

However he went to meetings there till they was disturbed once a soldier came up into the Meeting making a Great disturbance

W.P. Go's to him takes him by the collar and would have throw'd him down stairs but a friend or two come to him desiring to let him alone for they was a peaceable people and would not have [him] make a disturbance there then he was very much concern'd he had caused friends to be uneasy by his roughness. —The soldier went to the Magistrates and brought the Officers wch broke up the Meeting and made several of them prisoners and him among the Rest.

when they was brought before the Magistrate he knowing W.P. told him he did not think him a Quaker so would not send him to Gaol but Wm told him whether he thought him so or not he was one and if he sent his friends to Prison he was willing to go with them then the Magistrate said he should go with 'em (As he went to prison he gave his sword to his man & never wore one after) but writes a letter to the Governor that he had commit'd W.P. prisoner among the Quakers. The Governor sent order that he should be released also another to his Father wch acquaint'd him of his son's being a Quaker wch occasion'd him to send order to his son to come to him in England wch order he obey'd & landed at Bristoll where he staid some meetings to strengthen himself knowing his Father would not be very pleasant upon him.

J. Coal went with him to London also to his Father's house to see how he was likely to be entertain'd but his Father kept his temper while J.C. was there but at night observing him use thee or thou was very angry Wm told him 'twas in obeydiance to God and not in any disrespect to him however then his Father told him he might thee & thou who he pleas'd except the King the Duke of York and himself but them he should not (thee or thou) but he answer'd he must speak in the singular number both to the King the Duke and himself wch made his father very angry, but as he was going upstairs to bed his Father bid him rise in the morning for he should go out in his coach with him wch caused Wm to be so uneasy that he could not sleep fearing he was to be had to court In the morning they went in the coach together but Wm did not know Where they was Going However the Coachman was Order'd to drive into the Park then he found his Fathers intent was to have private discourse with him his Father beginning with him told him he could not tell what he could think of himself after he had train'd him up in Learning and other accomplishments for a

courtier—for an Ambassador or other Minister that he should become a Quaker he answer'd that it was in Obedience to the Manifestation of God in his own Conscience but a cross to his own Nature also told him of that former meeting which was of his own promoting also how he observed his Father in tears at that time and that he believ'd him to be convinced of the truth of the Doctrine of the Quakers as well as himself only the Grandure of the World was too great for him to give up therefore had Got over the Reaches he had received.

after more discourse they return'd and at a tavern his father proposed taking of a Glass of wine when they came into the Room his Father lock'd the Door then William expected he was to be caned but instead of that his Father laying his hands on the table told him he would kneel down and pray to God that he might not be a Quaker nor go to any more of there meetings; Wm open'd the Casement and sayd before he would hear his Father pray after that manner he would leep out at winder: A Nobleman was going by the Door in his Coach [seeing] Sir Wm's Coach stand there st[opt] his coach to speak wt [Sr] Wm came and knockt at the [door] which stopt his Father's prayer the door being open'd he came in first came up to Wm and saluted him then turn'd to his Father told him he might think himself happy in a son that could Dispise the Grandure of the world and refrain from the many vices they were running after which very much encouraged Wm: after more discourse they parted then Wm and his Father went to another Nobleman's house wch Nobleman also spoke much in favour of Wm to his Father: they return'd home:

after some time Wm went to bear a friend company to () as they rod a long the Road Wm thought his two tailed wigg which he had not yet left off, was burdensom to him took of his hat turnd his wigg of his head behind him not looking back to see what became of it he had some hair tho' but short when he came to () they had a meeting where Wm's Mouth was first open'd then went to several other places at one place the Magistrate knowing who Wm was sent to one of the Secretarys how Wm with other were causing tumults by preaching the Quakers Doctrine at that his Father finding where to send to him sent him orders to return home the friend he was with advised him to obey his Father's order which after some little time he did, coming to London went to a meeting before he went to see his Father after meeting went up into the Room where a Friend brought Guly Springett wch was the first time he saw her who was afterwards his wife;

but returning home his Father told him he had heard what work he had been making in the country and after some discourse his Father told him to take his cloaths and be Gon from his house for he should not be there also that he should dispose of his Estate to them that pleased him better Wm Gave his Father to understand how great a cross 'twas to him to disoblige his Father not in regard to his Estate but from the Filial affection he bore him but as he was convinced of the Truth he must be faithfull so Go's up stairs and packt up a small bundle comes down again saluts his Mother and Sisters then tells his Father how unpleasant his Displeasure was to him but should always think himself obliged to pray for his Father so left his father's house only with his small bundle as he went out of the house heard Great cry's by his mother and sisters but was not Got far before a servant was sent for him to return when he return'd his Father was gon out of the way so he soon got to his Room till his Father's displeasure was something abated.

Dr. Hull writes:

It may appear, in this twentieth century, that both Penn and his father [like Thomas Ellwood and his father, and Isaac Penington and his father before them] grossly exaggerated a relatively unimportant point of Quakerism by stressing the use of "thee" and "thou" and the custom of doffing the hat to one's social superiors. But in seventeenth-century England they were crucial tests of the profession of Quakerism, and they were symbols not only of a social theory based upon democracy but of a religion which sought to apply literally the injunction "... whatever you do do all to the glory of God."

His earliest biographer in the Folio Penn says:

When all Endeavours proved ineffectual to shake his Constancy, and his Father saw himself utterly disappointed of his Hopes, he could no longer endure him in his sight, but turn'd him out of Doors the second Time. Thus expos'd to the Charity of his friends [delightful phrase!] having no other Subsistence (except what his Mother privately sent him) he endur'd the Cross with a Christian Patience and Magnanimity comforting himself with the Promise of Christ, Luke XVIII 29. 30.

Never surely was that promise more amply fulfilled. Could the Admiral but have guessed how "The Founder" was to be revered and remembered throughout two continents, could he

but have seen his son's statue dominating the city of Philadelphia, a larger city than any known in his day, he would indeed have owned that the Master whom his son had so faithfully followed had indeed given him "much more" than his own fondest hopes had craved.

"How far God's gifts put man's best dreams to shame," indeed. But his earliest biographer says:

His steady Perseverance evincing his Integrity his Father's wrath became somewhat mollified, so that he winked at his return to, and continuance in his Family.

Aubrey comments succinctly: "His father was a very good man but no Quaker."

The end of the narrative seems rather flat. If this second banishment from his father's house lasted only a few hours it seems hardly worth a mention. William himself does not allude to it in his own account of these days. He merely speaks of the earlier occasion when he was both caned and banished from home on being sent down from Oxford.

Still, what a dramatic scene it is, happening on the same day that he met Gulielma for the first time. And how much that increases the severity of his father's threat to "dispose of his estate to them that pleased him better." William Penn, the son and heir of Admiral Sir William Penn, would be considered by society as a fitting suitor and husband for even that "great heiress," the beautiful Gulielma Springett. Whereas William Penn, the Quaker, the Admiral's disinherited son, had nothing from a worldly point of view to offer her: money, prospects, home—all were gone. Still, the two had met. They had seen each other. Possibly that made up for everything? Anyhow, something had happened to make Gulielma's faithful Thomas Ellwood realize that "he for whom she was reserved" had appeared at last. Speedily he set off in search of his second best.

The critical year 1668 was not yet ended; other memorable events were to happen before it closed. For the first time Penn "came forth in the Ministry," i.e. began to speak in meeting. In the autumn young William went more than once to the

Court of Charles II, not now as a gay gallant but in company with two weighty Friends, Josiah Coale and George Whitehead, to appeal for "liberation and toleration for the banished Quakers."

A few weeks later he was summoned to the death-bed of his "father in the faith," Thomas Loe. In a letter to Isaac Pennington (probably intended not for his eyes alone) he describes this as follows:

About 4 days before he died I fell sick myself: but hearing at what point it was with dear Thomas, I could not long keep my bed, but got up, and though in a sweat, yet I hastened to him, whom I found in a great readiness to be gone. Friends stood, much affected, round his bed. When I came in and had set myself upon the bedside, several heavenly expressions fell from his mouth, ". . . bear thy Cross: and stand faithful for God, and bear thy testimony in thy day and generation: and he will give thee an eternal crown of glory that none shall ever take from thee. There is not another way. This is the way that the Holy men of old walked in. Take it and thou shalt prosper. . . ." At last he went away with a great stillness, having fought like a valiant Soldier the good Fight and overcome, whose works follow him. Whom my soul loved whilst living, and bemoans now dead, and yet have pure fellowship with him which lives for ever. The day following we laid the vessel in the ground as having done its master's work and will.

As has been said, Thomas Loe and that other notable Thomas, Thomas Curtis, live in Quaker history and remembrance as two of the notable carriers of our faith, famous less for what they did themselves than for what they inspired others to do. It was while he was a tradesman at Oxford that Thomas Loe himself was convinced there by John Camm on his Mission to the South in 1652. As Camm convinced Loe, and Loe in his turn convinced Penn, it may be said that the simple farmhouse still to be seen above Preston Patrick, John Camm's home, is the original roof-tree from whence sprang Philadelphia and all Pennsylvania.

Josiah Coale, Penn's other "Father in the Quaker Faith," also died shortly after Thomas Loe. Penn's real authorship dates from this year. *Truth Exalted*, a defence of Quakerism,

was published first in 1668 and was followed by his *The Sandy Foundation Shaken*, a polemical tract, which was found to “smack of heresy.” It was stigmatized in a current news-letter as “a horrid and abominable piece against the Holy Trinity” and the author was committed to the Tower, “the familiar building of his boyhood” (as W. C. Braithwaite reminds us), “for he was born on Tower Hill.” (*Second Period*, p. 61.)

On the other hand, the critical Pepys procured a copy of this book and said:

I find it so well writ as I think it is too good for him ever to have writ it; and it is a serious sort of book and not fit for everybody to read.

It must be conceded that this attempt by a young man of twenty-four to deal with and expound the deepest mysteries of the Christian faith does not attract readers to-day. It is not surprising that his contemporaries were outraged by some of his contentions, which needed the explanation he gave in his later tract, *Innocency with her Open Face*.

Penn was visited in the Tower by Dr. Stillingfleet, afterwards Bishop of Worcester, and by his father. The Bishop of London was determined that he should either recant or die a prisoner.¹ When Dr. Stillingfleet wished to persuade him out of his errors Penn retorted that “the Tower was the worst argument in the world.” Still, the later publication of *Innocency* did something to clear men’s minds as to his true position and he was finally set free in August 1669.

These months of imprisonment are, however, chiefly memorable because in them he spent his long hours of leisure in writing *No Cross, No Crown*, which has been called “a worthy contribution to the world’s immortal prison literature.” (*Second Period*, p. 61.)

The first part of it was composed mainly to explain to William’s former friends in the gay world the reasons for the Quaker testimonies as to the use of the plain language, “hat honour” and so forth. These have largely lost their interest for modern readers; except that the friends he had known in

¹ See letter from Penn’s servant to Gulielma Springett in Appendix III.

the gay world are designated by initials, among whom W. C. Braithwaite thinks that "I. N." may stand for Isaac Newton (1642-1727). The main themes of the book, the author's arguments against luxury and his advocacy of a simpler life, are still needed and in many ways are up to date. Moreover they give us a clear and valuable picture of the manners and customs in these Restoration days against which Friends protested so vehemently. The descriptions of fashionable dress and ornaments are vivid enough to be worth quoting. Evidently the title *No Cross, No Crown* and the main argument are reminiscences of the dying words of his friend Thomas Loe. Their friendship, short though it was in actual intercourse on earth, must be measured, like Tennyson's for Arthur Hallam, and many another both before and since, "not only by the years they had together on earth but also by the years" in which the friend removed by death "was still a factor in the other's life."

Penn writes in the Preface:

O Reader . . . Yield up thy Body, Soul and Spirit to Him that maketh all things new; New Heavens and New Earth: New Love, New Joy, New Peace, New Works, a New Life and Conversation. . . . Christ's Cross is Christ's Way to Christ's Crown. This is Subject of the following Discourse; first writ during my Convinement in the Tower of London, in the year 1668 . . . that thou, Reader may'st be won to Christ and if won already, brought nearer to Him. Tis a Path God in His Everlasting Kindness guided my Feet into, in the Flower of my Youth when about Two and Twenty years of Age: Then he took me by the Hand, and led me out of the Pleasures, Vanities and Hopes of the World.

A little further on he denounces the formal type of religion he had previously known:

Thou didst omit to take up Christ's holy Yoak, to bear thy daily Cross, thou wast careless of thine Affections . . . the pure Eye grew dim . . . True, there still remained the exterior forms of Worship and a Nominal and Oral Reverence to God and Christ; but that was all. . . . And a Thousand Shells cannot make one Kernel. . . .

Thus Religion fell from Experience to Tradition, and

Worship from Power to Form, from Life to Letter; that instead of putting up lively and powerful Requests, animated by the deep sense of Want, and the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, by which the Ancients prayed, wrestled & prevailed with God; behold a by-rote Mumpsimus a dull and insipid Formality, made up of Corporal Bowings and Cringings, Garments and Furniture, Perfumes, Voices and Musick; fitter for the Reception of some Earthly Prince, than the true and heavenly Worship of the true and immortal God who is an Eternal, Invisible Spirit.

This is very like Mary Penington's experience in her early girlhood, and her difficulty about praying from a book, recorded in Book One of this volume. The thirty years or so that had elapsed since then had not altered the orientation of a seeking soul. William Penn continues:

Well . . . inform thyself of the Way of thy Recovery. For look at what Door thou wentest out, at that Door thou must come in; And as letting fall and forbearing the daily Cross lost thee; so taking up and enduring the daily Cross, must recover thee. . . . Nothing short of this will do; mark that, for as it is sufficient, so it is indispensable. No CROWN but by the CROSS: No Life Eternal but through Death: His Cross is the Death of Sin that caused his Death, and he the Death of Death, according to that Passage O DEATH! I WILL BE THY DEATH. . . .

The Cross of Christ is a Figurative Speech, borrowed from the outward Tree, or Wooden Cross on which Christ submitted to the Will of God in permitting him to suffer Death at the Hands of Evil Men. So that the Cross Mystical is that Divine Grace and Power which crosseth the Carnal Wills of Men. . . . For nothing else can mortifie Sin or make it easie for us to submit to the Divine Will in Things otherwise very contrary to our own.

Wonderful, is it not, that this young gallant and courtier of twenty-four should already have pierced so deeply into the inmost secrets of life? Possibly the "most rigorous Imprisonment" he was suffering in the Tower had been his best teacher. It is strange to think of much¹ of the stately music of his prose musings issuing from the midst of those old blood-stained stones,

¹ "Much" but not all, for a greatly expanded edition of *No Cross, No Crown* was issued in 1682, before Penn sailed for America, from which later ones are printed.

said by an ancient chronicler to have been originally cemented together with mortar tempered with the blood of sacrificial beasts. (Brailsford, p. 259.)

Again, the real agony it had caused William to frustrate his father's hopes comes out in another poignantly revealing passage:

God often touches our best Comforts, and calls for that we most love, and are least willing to part with. Not that he always takes it utterly away, but to prove the Soul's Integrity, to caution us from Excesses and that that we may remember God, the Author of those Blessings we possess, and live loose to them. I speak my Experience: The Way to *keep* our Enjoyments, is to resign them: and tho that be hard, 'tis sweet to see them return'd with more Love and Blessing than before. . . .

The Way of God is a Way of Faith, as dark to Sense, as mortal to Self. . . . For Self can't receive it: That which should, is apprest by Self; fearful and dares not. O what will my Father or Mother say? How will my Husband use me? Or finally, what will the Magistrate do with me? For though I have a most powerful and clear Conviction upon my Soul, of this or that Thing, yet considering how *unmodish* it is, what Enemies it has, and how *strange* and *singular* I shall seem to them, I hope God will pity my Weakness. If I sink I am but Flesh and Blood: it may be hereafter he will better enable me; and there is Time enough. Thus *Selfish*, Fearful Man.

The fact that Penn himself was described by Mrs. Pepys on his return from France as "a most modish person," lends point to the above.

A little bit of scathing irony comes in the midst of a long defence of the plain language. One reason which the Quakers gave for using it was that they said it could not be insulting to address their social superiors in the same way that they addressed their Maker.

Canst thou [he inquires of an objector] approach the God of thy Breath and great Judge of thy Life, with *Thou* and *Thee*, and when thou risest off thy knees, scorn a Christian for giving to thee, (poor Mushroom of the Earth) no better Language than thou hast given to God but just before?

Luxury in all its forms receives condemnation as utterly in

these Restoration days as it was to do from John Woolman in the following century.

Sumptuous Apparel, Rich Unguents, Delicate Washes, Stately Furniture, Costly Cookery &c. such Diversions as Balls, Masques, Musick-Meetings, Plays, Romances, &c. which are the Delights and Entertainment of the Times, belong to the Holy Path that Jesus & his True Disciples trod to Glory: No. . . . For they cannot think that he will give them a place in Heaven that refuse Him any in their Hearts on Earth.

I conclude that the Fashions and Recreations now in Repute are very abusive of the end of Man's Creation: And that the Inconveniencies that attend them, as Wantonness, Idleness, Prodigality, Pride, Lust, Respect of Persons (witness a Plume of Feathers, or a Lace-Coat in a country Village, what ever be the Man that wears them) with the like Fruits, are repugnant to the Duty, Reason, and True Pleasure of Man. . . .

To such [Pleasure-Lovers] it is tedious and offensive to speak of Heaven or another Life. . . . Their Thoughts are otherwise employed: Their Mornings are too short for them to Wash, to Smooth, to Paint, to Patch, to Braid, to Curl, to Gum, to Powder, and otherwise to Attire and Adorn themselves; whilst their Afternoons are as commonly bespoke for Visits, and for Plays: where their usual Entertainment is some Stories fetcht from the more approved Romances; some Strange Adventures, Some Passionate Amours, Unkind Refuses, Grand Impediments, Importunate Addresses, Miserable Disappointments, Wonderful Surprises, Unexpected Encounters, Castles Surprized, Imprisoned Lovers rescued, and Meetings of Supposed Dead Ones: Bloody Duels, Languishing Voices Echoing from Solitary Groves, Overheard Mournful Complaints, deep-fetcht Sighs sent from Wild Deserts, Intrigues managed with unheard of Subtilty: And whilst all Things seem at the greatest Distance, then are Dead People alive, Enemies Friends, Despair turned to Enjoyment, and all their Impossibilities reconciled: Things that never were, are not, nor ever shall or can be, they all come to pass.

What a category! There seem to be allusions to several of Shakespeare's plays, and some of his conventional happy endings can hardly escape.

How many pieces of Ribband, and what Feathers, Lace-Bands, and the like, did Adam and Eve wear in Paradise, or out

of it? What rich Embroideries, Silks, Points, etc. had Abel, Enoch, Noah, and good old Abraham? Did Eve, Sarah, Susanna, Elizabeth and the Virgin Mary use to curl, Powder, Patch, Paint, wear false Locks of strange Colours, Rich Points, Trimmings, Lac'd Gowns, Embroider'd Petticoats, Shoes with Slip-slaps, lac'd with Silk or Silver Lace, and ruffled like Pigeons Feet, with several Yards, if not pieces of Ribband? How many Plays did Jesus Christ and his Apostles recreate themselves at . . . ?

But the Temperance I plead for, is not only Religiously but Politically Good. Tis the Interest of Good Government to Curb and Rebuke Excesses: It prevents many Mischiefs: Luxury brings Effeminacy, Laziness, Poverty and Misery, but Temperance preserves the Land. It keeps out Foreign Vanities and improves our own Commodities. Now we are their Debtors, then they would be Debtors to us for our Native Manufactures.

This whole section is extraordinarily up to date and contains truths still too often forgotten to-day.

By this Means, such Persons, who, by their Excess, not Charity, have deeply engaged their Estates, may in short Space be enabled to clear them from those Incumbrances, which otherwise (like Moths) soon eat out plentiful Revenues. It helps Persons of mean Substance, to improve their small stocks, that they may not expend their Dear Earnings, and Hard-got Wages, upon Superfluous Apparel, Foolish May-Games, Plays, Dancings, Shews, Taverns, Ale-Houses, and the like Folly and Intemperance; of which this Land is more infested, and by which is rendred more Ridiculous, than any Kingdom in the World. For none I know of is so infested with cheating Mountebanks, Savage Morris-Dancers, Pick-Pockets, Profane Players, and Stagers: to the Slight of Religion, the Shame of Government, and the great Idleness, Expence and Debauchery of the People. . . .

Wherefore we cannot but loudly call upon the Generality of the Times, & testifie, both by our Life and Doctrine, against the like Vanities and Abuses, if possibly any may be weaned from their Folly and choose the good old Path of Temperance, Wisdom, Gravity and Holiness, the only Way to inherit the Blessings of Peace and Plenty here, and Eternal Happiness hereafter.

Lastly . . . when People have first learned to Fear, Worship, and Obey their Creator, to pay their numerous vicious Debts,

to alleviate and abate their oppressed Tenants, but, above all outward Regards, when the Pale Faces are more commiserated, the pinch'd Bellies relieved, and naked Bodies clothed: when the famished Poor, the distressed Widow and helpless Orphan (God's Works and your Fellow Creatures) are provided for; then I say (if then) it will be Time enough for you to plead the Indifferency of your Pleasures.

But that the Sweat and tedious Labour of the Husband-Men, early and late, cold and hot, wet and dry, should be converted into the Pleasure of a small Number of Men: That the Cart, the Plough, the Thresh, should be in continual Severity laid upon Nineteen Parts of the Land to feed the inordinate Lusts and delicious Appetites of the Twentieth, is so far from the Appointment of the Great Governour of the World, and God of the Spirits of all Flesh, that to imagine such horrible Injustice as the result of his determinations, and not the Intemperance of Men, were wretched and Blasphemous. . . . So that the Great are not, (with the Leviathan in the Deep) to prey upon the Small, much less to make a Sport of the Lives and Labours of the Lesser Ones, to gratifie their Inordinate Senses.

I therefore humbly offer an Address to the Serious Consideration of the Supreme Magistrate, that if the Money which is expended in every Parish in such vain Fashions, as Wearing of Laces, Jewels, Embroideries, Unnecessary Ribbons, Trimming, Costly Furniture and Attendance, together with what is commonly consumed in Taverns, Feasts, Gaming etc. could be collected into a Publick Stock, or something in lieu of this extravagant and fruitless Expence, there might be Reparation to the broken Tenants, Work-Houses for the Able, and Alms-houses for the Aged and Impotent. Then should we have no Beggars in the Land, the cry of the Widow and Orphan would cease, and Charitable Reliefs might easily be afforded towards the Redemption of Poor Captives, and Refreshment of such distressed Protestants as labour under the Miseries of Persecution in other Countries: Nay, the Exchequer's Needs, on Just Emergencies, might be supplied by such a Bank: This Sacrifice would please the Just and Merciful God: It would be a noble Example of Gravity and Temperance to Foreign States and an Unspeakable Benefit to ourselves at Home. (Folio Penn, vol. i.)

These are lengthy quotations, but are they too long? Are they out of date even to-day? And are they not in place here,

for the light they throw on the mind of the man who was to win Gulielma's heart?

To point the contrasts he describes, it is well to remember that many of these fierce diatribes against soft living, though they may have been penned in a bleak cell of the Tower, came from a young man, a courtier, who had been accustomed from birth to the luxury he condemned.

Just about this time the author's father, Admiral Penn, was settling into a new country house at Wanstead in Essex.

The tireless labours of A. C. Myers have recently brought to light an inventory of the actual contents of William's parents' home. Though too long to quote in full, some of the contents may be given to form a background for the young reformer's ideas. More of the inventory will be found in his *William Penn's Early Life in Brief*.

The Hall contained among other articles "7 old chairs, a folding stool, a clock, a billiard table, a pair of tables, a green carpet of 'bays,' and six pictures old and new."

In the "Dining Roome" were to be seen six pieces of forrest Hangings 9 foot deep [these were probably tapestries], eleven needlework chayrs and a cloath Couch, one dozen of truky [Turkey] work chayrs and couch of the same, 2 tables, 2 carpets, 4 window curtains, rods and stuff, one great glas and one picture over the chimney of 3 frigotts.

These last were doubtless vessels formerly under the Admiral's command, like the photographs of their ships that adorn the walls of modern steamship owners.

The "blew chamber," a bedroom, included 6 pieces of Tapestry 10 foot deep, one bedsteed, silk Quilt, Suit of Curtains vallens of sky colour tabby and lin'd with yellow sarsnet, a mat, cord, rods, 1 pillo, 4 blankets, A little old Carpet, Trunk, lookingglas, a stand, 5 blew old and 1 other some old blew hangings of bays, one picture and nurses chair, one green satten Quilt, and one pallet, 8 yards of crimson sarsnet in 2 chariot Curtains and 31 yards of purple satten.

The contents of the "Ladies Closset" will make any modern housewife envious. It contained

One great trunk, another litle in her chamber, 1 chayr, 3 Trunks, 1 table, 1 carpet, stript hangings, embroyderd letter case, one broyderd beard brush, gilded letter case, 3 pictures, looking glass, close stool, 3 Damask Table Cloaths, 3 dozen of damask napkins, 7 diaper table cloaths, 8 dozen of damask napkins, 4 dozen of plain napkins, 7 damask napkins, 3 dozen of plain napkins, 20 pair of flaxen sheets, 2 pair of holland sheets, 1 dozen and a half of damask and dyaper Towells, 4 common Table cloaths, about 3 dozen of course Napkins and 10 Towels.

The last few items were probably for the use of the household staff. This was the well-appointed home to which Penn returned when he was at length released from prison in August 1669. Janney says that his liberation came about through the intercession of James Duke of York, and that this produced in Penn's mind "a sentiment of gratitude and strong personal attachment which accompanied him through life." Some persons imagined that he was only let out from the Tower in order to be transported overseas. Anyhow he was not allowed to stay at home long. His father seems to have been somewhat touched by *No Cross, No Crown* and, soon after William's release, dispatched him once again on business to Ireland. Happily, on his way to Bristol, where he spent a month before embarking, he managed to visit Gulielma at Bury Farm, near Amersham. This was now the Peningtons' home, they having been turned out of Chalfont Grange, as Mary Penington relates (see page 40).

Here William arrived on 16 September 1669, but only to stay for one night. That night was spent, in true early-Quaker fashion, by having a Friends Meeting at the Farm. Perhaps it was on this visit that for the first time William and Gulielma became acknowledged lovers, hoping to be wed as soon "as way should open" (in Quaker phraseology) for their union. Mabel Brailsford says truly:

To William Penn himself Quakerism had brought poverty and imprisonment. The Tower was behind him and (although he did not know it) Newgate before him. . . . But from this day forward he did not walk alone. At his side went "the love of his youth, one of ten thousand," his "entire and constant friend": Gulielma.

Of her own life at this time little is known. A local tradition tells of her cheering Milton in his blindness by going to sing to him in his cottage at Amersham and play to him on her lute. No documentary evidence remains of this charming picture but it may well have been an actual and recurring fact, for Milton's "pretty Box" was within easy reach of Bury Farm. Aubrey says that Milton "always had a garden where he lived," and adds that he could only compose between the autumn equinox and the vernal; so he might have had plenty of time to listen to Gulielma's singing during the long summer days and evenings. She is also stated to have acted as his amanuensis and read aloud to him in his blindness.

Only a few facts emerge about Gulielma from the time when she passes into the background of Thomas Ellwood's Journal, except for one reappearance therein, until her wedding day, three years later, when she re-emerges and becomes the "Guli Penn" of later days.

Here, however, are the actual notes of this short visit to Bury Farm, as recorded in William Penn's own Journal, all the more revealing for their brevity and for what they leave unsaid.

7th mo. 16th I came to J.P. . . .

17th I left Amersham and took leave for my journey but at maiden-head missing of my servant. I returned to J.P.

18th I went with G.S. to Pen-Street, return'd at night.

19th G.S. S.H. &c went afoot to meeting at Russles and I with them.

20th J.P. M.P. Jo.P. J.G. my self and P.F. went to Reading: G.S. and T.E. accompany'd us beyond Maiden-head. T.E. & P.F. exchanged horses: one at 05.10.00. the other at 09.00.00. We arriv'd at Reading, visited the prisoners.

H. J. Cadbury points out that the above-mentioned "Russles" means Jordans. Here in after years both William and Gulielma were to be buried side by side in the quiet burial ground, close to the Friends' Meeting House, where the plain tombstones of most of the principal persons mentioned in this story are still to be seen.

Chapter Four

BETROTHAL

“He for whom she was Reserved”

IF this were a biography of William Penn, which it is not, it would be tempting to linger over this sojourn in Ireland. From his carefully kept Journal it seems to have been a strange medley of attention to business concerning his father's and mother's estates, and also some connected with Gulielma's own property in Ireland, of mingling with high society in Dublin, on the one hand, and, on the other, of attending Quaker meetings, preaching, and visiting Friends in prison and trying to mitigate their sufferings. The following extracts show that these Quaker interests seem to have taken the largest share both of his thoughts and of “My Irish Journall.”¹ They are given here because they bring Gulielma's now acknowledged lover before us more vividly than many pages of description.

Many people came [he writes on 21 November 1688], amongst the rest severall of the Ruder, Boisterous Gallants to gaiz on me, which they did for allmost an hour. meeting being done we went out where I [?] spoak to them very sharply, and so we parted.

Besides many disputes with neighbouring priests, various adventures were met with on his travels. William once made a journey of “29 Irish miles, near 50 English” to Cloheen, during which he and his companions “were lost on the mountain and fain to grope our way. at last gott Over by many wonderful precipises and came to Cloheen by an other guid from the foot of the mountain.”

Though Penn escaped actual imprisonment on this journey

¹ Published in *P.M.H.B.*, vol. xl.

he often met with abuse. In one place, after distributing some literature, he says:

[13th May.] I was with the Mayor about my books, he abus'd me with names as Cokscome, Jackanapes, fellow, foole etc.

Riding about the country he was also employed in buying and selling horses: "I went to C. Gales," he writes, "put out the gray gelder to grass. he gave me a stone Coult." At Corabby I chainged my dun Nag for a flea-bit mare," and so on. George Fox, in his Journal, often shows his care for the comfort and proper feeding of his mounts, but he does not describe them in detail as Penn does; the latter was evidently a lover of horses.

The meetings he attended he describes as "great," "very heavenly," "fresh and quiet," "as precious a meeting as ever I was in," and other individual phrases. In one, he says, he himself "preached one hour and a half and pray'd twice." On the 27th 1st mo. 1670 "We had a very good meeting. W. Mor spoak 3. myselfe 2. and once call'd upon the Lord god of life." But he was not always a lengthy preacher. "Spoak a few words to backsliders" is a more engaging entry; and, visiting Friends in prison, "spoak a few words in the pure life."

On the 5th of 4th month

We had a large but hard meting being the first day. [Modern Friends too know that meeting!] Severall great ones, The Countess of Mt Allexander & of Cloncarthy, the lady horny etc, & god's powr was over them all and they reach'd.

J. W. Graham observes:

Penn came late, as Paul into Christianity, and brought like him the culture of the upper class into a body founded by simpler folk.

The special interest of the Irish Journal, so far as this book is concerned, lies in the lists it gives of his correspondents, because they corroborate what has been already said, that at least from the time of William's visit to Bury Farm he and Gulielma were acknowledged lovers. Signs of their growing intimacy are apparent in these lists of letters written from Ireland.

At first, Gulielma Springett appears in the list under the guise of *G.S.* or *Gul*; but later “myo.d. ff.” or “o.b.f.” were made to stand for “my own dear (or best) Friend.” On one day he wrote to her twice; and occasionally he notes the receipt of a letter from “my o.b.ff.” One of these entries occurs five days before he left Ireland, and probably contained an invitation from Guli to stop and see her en route to London. Among his purchases or presents in Ireland was doubtless one for her; and it is not difficult to distinguish it among those which he mentions as follows: basketts; a Greek Psalter; 7 & 3 gallons of usquebough, bespoak at the widdow goulds; and frize for fds in England. (Hull, pp. 102–3.)

It was in the beginning of July, writes his earliest biographer, that “through his earnest applications to the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Arran and the Lord Lieutenant, an order in Council was obtained for “the release of the imprisoned Friends.” Then having settled his Father’s Concerns to Satisfaction, and done his own Friends many Signal Services, he shortly after returned again into England. (Folio Penn, p. 7.)

How and where the lovers met again is not known. Though it would be pleasant to picture them as speedily reunited, and setting out on their lifelong pilgrimage together, the actual course of events was far different. Nearly two more years apart and many more difficulties and sufferings had to be faced before the longed-for wedding-day arrived.

For the heavy clouds that had been lowering in the public sky had broken at last. In this year, 1670,

came forth the Conventicle Act, prohibiting Dissenter’s Meetings under severe Penalties: The Edge of this New Weapon was presently turned upon the Quakers, who, not being accustomed to flinch in the Cause of Religion, stood most exposed. Being forcibly kept out of their Meeting-House in Grace-Church Street, they met as near it in the Street as they could, and William Penn there Preaching, was apprehended, and by Warrant from Sir Samuel Starling, then Lord Mayor of London, dated August the 14th, 1670, committed to Newgate.

The prisoners were kept while awaiting their trial for a fortnight in a place known as “The Black Dog,” “a sponging house

in Newgate Market" (Hull), which is described as "the nastiest place in the most loathsome gaol in England."

What that means can better be imagined than described. Penn himself says that it was "so noisome and stinking that the Lord Mayor would think it an unfit sty for his Swine."

At the next Sessions, together with William Meade (who became later the husband of George Fox's stepdaughter, Sarah Fell of Swarthmoor Hall), he was indicted "for being present at and Preaching to an Unlawful, Seditious, and Riotous Assembly."

The Penn-Meade trial that followed, the assertions of innocence of the prisoners and the dauntless bearing of the jurymen who refused to be bullied into giving a verdict against their consciences, is a well-known episode of English history. Known as Bushel's case, it establishes the right of juries to give the verdict their conscience approves, and disallows the judge to attempt to browbeat them. Penn's own knowledge of the English law helped him in his defence, while his gallant acceptance of man-handling must have influenced all right-thinking people.

When the Recorder threatened to cut off the nose of Bushel, the most notable of the jurymen, Penn exclaimed "It is intolerable that my Jury should be so menaced." "Stop his Mouth," cried the Mayor. "Jailor, bring your fetters, and stake him to the ground."

"Do your pleasure," retorted Penn, "I matter not your fetters."

This is only one short sample. The whole trial is important enough to be read in full, as he himself wrote it. On the bench and among the foremost of his enemies was Alderman Sir John Robinson, Lieutenant of the Tower and nephew of Archbishop Laud, whom Pepys graphically describes as "a talking, bragging, buffleheaded fellow." This gentleman was determined that the prisoners should be put in gaol. And so it was. In spite of his defence and in spite of the jury's refusal to convict him of anything more than "speaking in Gracechurch Street," Penn was sent to Newgate, with William Meade and the jurymen.

Thus ended the famous trial of Penn and Meade in the Old Bailey. The prisoners and jury were sent to Newgate; but the second day thereafter "some one" (probably Penn's father) sent the money to pay the prisoners' fines and they were discharged, Penn to hasten to the death-bed of his father, who had only nine days more to live. The jurymen demanded their release every six hours and were finally released on a writ of *babeas corpus*; they then sued the mayor and recorder for illegal imprisonment. (Hull, p. 189.)

Finally, in the Court of Common Pleas, with twelve judges on the Bench, it was decided unanimously

That . . . juries must not be coerced in reaching or giving their verdict. "The Court may try to open the eyes of the jurors but not to lead them by the nose."

Penn described this vindication of trial by jury as the fairest flower that now grows in the garden of Englishmen's liberties.

A tablet has been set up on the site of the Old Bailey, commemorating the contribution made to the long and illustrious struggle for English liberty.

While the struggle was going on, touching letters had passed between Penn and his father.

Dear Father [he writes in September 1670] I desire thee not to be troubled at my present confinement. I could scarce suffer on a better account, nor by a worse hand, & the will of God be done. It is more grievous and uneasy to me that thou shouldest be so heavily exercised . . . than any living worldly concernment. . . . I am now a prisoner, notoriously against law. I desire the Lord God, in fervent prayer, to strengthen and support thee, and anchor thy mind in the thought of the immutable blessed state which is over all perishing concerns. I am, dear father, thy obedient son, William Penn. (Janney, Chap. IV.)

The inclusion of the word "anchor" shows that William knew a naval metaphor would convey his meaning best to the Admiral. But his father was dying at the age of forty-nine, and desirous that "none but his son Wm. should close his eyes." He longed to see his son at home once more. So he privately

paid the fine and had the joy of welcoming William again at Wanstead for the last few days before his own call came. Differences and disappointments were all over now. Even the scars left by memories of former thrashings and severity were healed. Both the old man and the young had possibly learned to appreciate each other's toughness. In former days the Admiral had refused to allow the King to create him Earl of Weymouth, his own heart's desire, because he knew his Quaker son would not accept a title: doubtless a bitter disappointment to the old courtier.

Now, as he took leave of his family on his death-bed, he turned to his son and said:

Son William, if you and your friends keep to your plain way of preaching, and to the plain way of living, you will make an end of priests to the end of the world. Bury me by my mother; live in love; shun all manner of evil; and I pray God to bless you all, and he will bless you. (Janney, Chap. V.)

So died Admiral Penn on 16 September 1670. He was buried according to his wish by his mother's side in the church of St. Mary Redcliffe at Bristol: the church which Queen Elizabeth had called the "fairest, goodliest & most famous parish church in England."

The hearse was drawn "by six horses and attended by several companies of foot-soldiers," and above it waved three flags representing the three squadrons which the Admiral had commanded. An elaborate monument was erected to his memory with a long epitaph on it composed by his son, which ends

He withdrew, prepared and made for his end; and with a gentle and even gale, in much peace, arrived and anchored in his last and best port, at Wanstead in the County of Essex, the 16th of September 1670, being then but forty-nine and four months old. (Janney, *ibid.*)

These filial duties fulfilled, William was at last free to follow his own heart. The early winter months were spent peacefully at Amersham or in its near neighbourhood. This is one of the

peaceful interludes in his stormy life. Here he wrote no less than three books.

Yet even here he was involved in controversy.

In the Ninth Month [November] this Year being at Oxford, and observing the cruel Usage and Persecution his Innocent Friends underwent there, from the Hands of the Junior Scholars, too much by the Connivance of their Superiors, he writ a letter to the Vice-Chancellor on that Subject. (Folio Penn, i, p. 36.)

John William Graham states that

The Vice-Chancellor carried on a miserable spy system. He employed men to go among the Nonconformists pretending unity with them and then having heard them talk freely, to prosecute them for their unsuspecting words. Nothing could be more contrary to all decent University instincts. But at this time the Universities were denominational colleges, and these Quakers and Baptists, advocating a lay ministry based on inspiration, endangered the whole craft of the place. Both Universities were fierce against Friends. (Graham, p. 62.)

Even women had been barbarously ill-treated there, as for instance—

“two Maids, Elizabeth Fletcher and Elizabeth Holmes who were moved to go to [St] Martin’s mass-house (*alias* Carefox) [Carfax]” were imprisoned and “severely whipt” and “put into the Cage, a place common for the worst of people; and accordingly next morning they was whipt and sent away, and on the backside of the Citty, meeting some schollars, they were moved to speak to them, who fell on them very violently and drew them into [St.] John’s Colledge, where they tyed them back to back and pumped water on them until they were allmost stifled; [and one of them received] hurt which she felt to her dying day.” (*F.P.T.*, p. 211.)

This is from the printed record in *First Publishers of Truth*. It happened in Commonwealth days. The manuscript accounts of Quaker sufferings in Oxford later on, with “the cruelties, indignities and vile actions to which Friends were subjected, are too minutely described to be reproduced in print.”

Evidently what he had heard and witnessed moved Penn to extreme wrath and indignation. His letter to the Vice-

Chancellor is one of his most fierce epistles. One scathing sentence is

Poor Mushroom, wilt thou war against the Lord, and lift up thyself to Battel against the Almighty? I tell thee No. (Folio Penn, i, p. 154.)

When Penn is blamed, as he has been, for the heat of this epistle, the indignation in his chivalrous soul at the treatment given to women Friends has to be remembered and allowed for. Very different from this fiery epistle are Penn's words, written some years later—one of his best legacies, surely, to posterity:

The Humble, Meek, Merciful, Just, Pious and Devout Souls, are everywhere of one Religion: and when Death has taken off the Mask they will know one another, though the divers Liveries they wear makes them Strangers. (*Fruits of Solitude.*)

Happily Penn had a peaceful retreat at Penn in Buckinghamshire, with Gulielma at Amersham only a few miles away. Nothing would be easier than to weave an imaginary romance round the figures of William and Gulielma in these days: to describe how, after their first rapturous encounter, they drew nearer to each other in heart and life every time they met, and even in absence; or to imagine how, even in early days, William Penn shared with his beloved the thoughts and plans for the New World, to which ever since his Oxford years he had “felt a drawing.”

But of all this, not a record remains. What is certain is that he spent these winter months in Buckinghamshire, with “its incomparable air, and where are delicious walks.” (Aubrey.) He was writing busily at three new books before his own troubles began again. As George Fox wrote in his Journal for this year (1671), “It was a cruel, bloody, persecuting time.” In February 1670/1 Penn was arrested for preaching at a meeting in Wheeler Street, in London.

On the fifth of the 12th Month this Year [February 1670/1] he being at a Meeting in Wheeler Street, a Sergeant with Soldiers came and plant'd themselves at the Door, where they

waited till he stood up and preached and then the Sergeant pull'd him down, and led him into the Street, where a Constable and his Assistants standing ready to joyn them, they carried him away to the Tower, by Order from the Lieutenant. A Guard was there clap't upon him, and a Messenger dispatch'd to the Lieutenant then at Whitehall, to inform him of the Success.

After about three Hours Time, it being Evening, he came home, and W. Penn was sent for from the Guard by an Officer with a File of Musqueteers. There were several in Company with Sir John Robinson, the Lieutenant of the Tower, as Sir Samuel Starling,¹ Sir John Shelden, and others. . . .

Then the following examination took place "taken down by an Eye-witness and Ear Witness":

Sir John Robinson: What is this Person's Name?

[Sir John Robinson was Penn's former adversary in the Penn-Meade trial of the previous year, and as Penn had been apprehended by his orders doubtless he knew him quite well.]

Const.: Mr. Penn, Sir.

J. R.: Is your name Penn?

W. P.: Dost thou not know me? Hast thou forgot me?

J. R.: I dont know you. I dont desire to know such as you are.

W. P.: If not, why didst thou send for me hither?

J. R.: Is that your Name, sir?

W. P.: Yes, Yes, my Name is Penn, thou know'st it is. I am not asham'd of my Name.

So the altercation continues until the Oath is tendered to him, the surest way to catch a Quaker, whose principles forbade him to swear.

Then Penn says: "This is a Prepense *Malice*. Thou hast several Times laid the Meetings for me and this Day particularly."

J. R.: No, I profess I could not tell you would be there.

W. P.: Thine own Corporal told me that you had Intelligence at the Tower that I would be at Wheeler Street to-day, almost as soon as I knew myself. It is disingenuous and partial, I never gave thee occasion for such unkindness.

J. R.: I knew no such Thing but if I had, I confess I should have sent for you.

W. P.: That might have been spar'd, I do heartily believe it.

J. R.: I vow, Mr. Penn, I am sorry for you; you are an ingenious

¹ Starling had already written of Penn as "a wild Rambling Colt."

Gentleman, all the World must allow you, and do allow you that; and you have a plentiful Estate; Why should you render yourself unhappy by associating with such a Simple People?

W. P.: I confess, I have made it my Choice to relinquish the Company of those that are Ingeniously Wicked, to converse with those that are Honestly Simple.

J. R.: I wish you wiser.

W. P.: And I wish thee Better.

Finally Robinson said: "Well, I must send you to Newgate for Six Months, and when they are expir'd you will come out." And Penn replied "Is that all? Thou well know'st a larger Imprisonment hath not daunted me. I accept it at the Hand of the Lord and am content to suffer His Will. . . . I would have thee and all men know, that I scorn that Religion which is not worth suffering for, and able to sustain those that are afflicted for it. Mine is, and whatever may be my Lot for my constant Profession of it I am no ways careful, but resign'd to answer the Will of God, by the Loss of Goods, Liberty and Life itself." . . . "Thy religion persecutes, and Mine forgives. And I desire my God to forgive you all, that are concern'd in my Commitment and I leave you in Perfect Charity, desiring your Everlasting Salvation.

J. R.: Send a Corporal with a File of Musketeers along with him.

W. P.: No, No, Send thy Lacquey: I know the way to Newgate. (Folio Penn, i, pp. 37-40.)

And off he went for six months to that foul prison den which Ellwood and others have vividly described.

Being in Prison he shortened the Hours of Confinement, which Inactivity would think tedious, by a continual Employment.

That is he wrote several treatises and also letters to those in authority.

Since the foregoing pages were written, there have reached me from America, through the generous kindness of Henry J. Cadbury, a few precious documents discovered by his research that have a bearing on the relationship between William Penn and Gulielma before their marriage. These will be found in full in Appendix III. They may, however, be shortly mentioned here,

since the last of them, a set of verses called "An Holy Triumph," was "Writt in Newgate, 1671" and inscribed "sent to Dr G. M. Springett, my Dr wife since."

When at length his six months of imprisonment had expired he was set at liberty in August 1671.

A little later in that same month an extract from George Fox's Journal, describing his embarkation for America, says:

About the 6th month I went doune with Margaret and Will Pen: and Mary Penningeton: and her daughter Guly: and we gott the kinges Barge: and they carryed us doune three miles below Gravesende.

And soe they went with mee to the dounes where we went.

A later entry amplifies this.

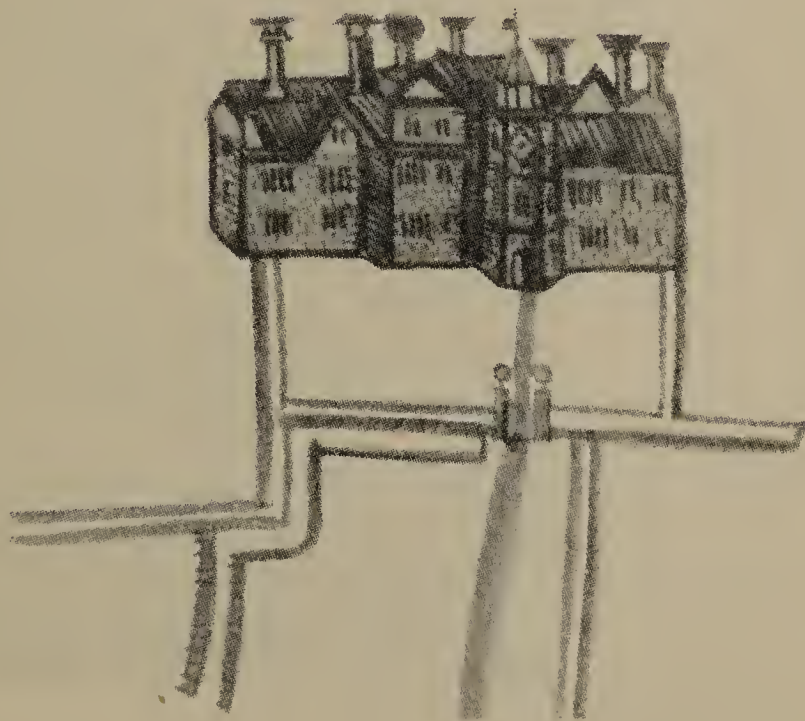
6. mo. 12th. G. F. with his wife and several friendes who had a desire to beare him Company to the Dounes, went from James Strut's in Wapping in one of the Kinge's Barges to the said Ship [the Catch called the Industry . . .], where G. F. staid aboard that night but most of the Company with William Penn &c lodged that night at Gravesend. . . . Early in the morning George Pattison, by G. F.'s order roused friends up who lodged at Gravesend about the first hour, and about the sixth those friends with some others of our Passengers went a Ship-board the Anker being weighed, and Ship ready to sail. Then after a little while many of our friends having taken their leaves passed away in very great tenderness; but G. F.'s wife with several others sailed with us as farre as the downes where that Evening we arrived, having had a very fine and quick passage of it having outsailed all such Ships that were likewise outward bound. . . . (*Camb. Jnl.*, ii, pp. 176-7.)

What a vivid scene it is. The little company of Friends sailing down the Thames in the evening light, the stay-at-home Friends proceeding as far as Deal with the travellers bound for the Western Hemisphere. Here, at last, most of the characters whose lives have been studied in this book are found nearly all of them together in one picture, the figures clearly outlined against the sunset glow. Two only are absent: Isaac Penington, as usual in a lonely prison, and Thomas Ellwood, at length united to his Mary, living with her in their home at Hunger Hill.

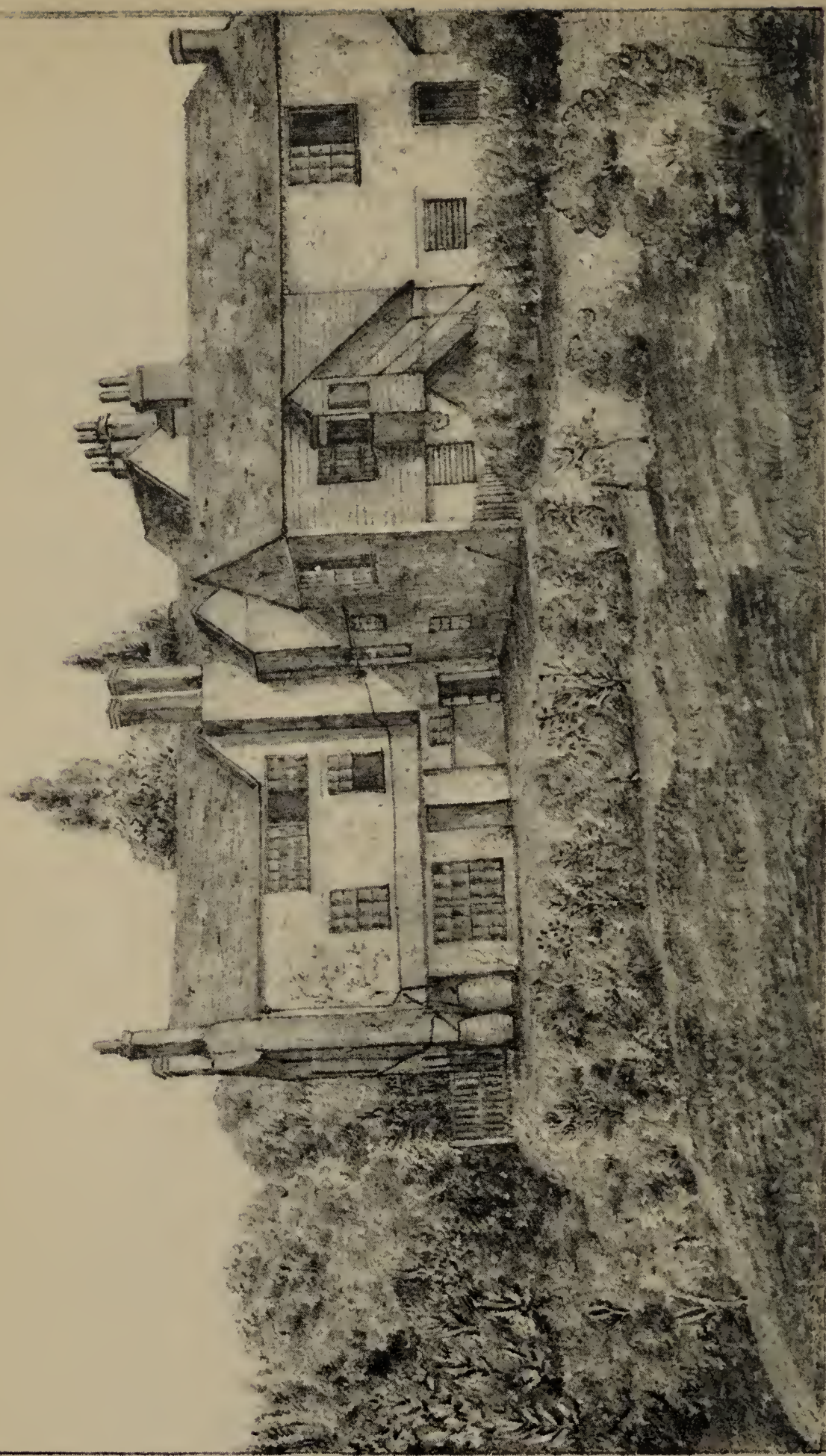


HUNGER HILL,

THE HOME OF THOMAS ELLWOOD



WARMINGHURST PLACE



BASING HOUSE, RICKMANSWORTH

Then, the following day, another stop at Deal and a visit from Friends in that place. These repeated stoppings and visits from local Friends seem strangely modern. They will remind all who have travelled in the Southern Hemisphere of the groups of welcoming Friends who still meet travellers at all the ports in succession, going round both Australia and New Zealand. Whatever their other failings may be, Friends, ancient and modern, have always been good welcomers.

About the afternoon [still at Deal] we came aboard where we met with some Dover Friends and Country adjacent who likewise came to visit G. F. and who afterwards took their leaves and so departed.

It is surely not stretching probability too far to feel fairly sure that among these Dover Friends Luke Howard, "the Shoemaker of Dover," would be conspicuous, greeting his old friend George Fox and very likely accompanied by his son-in-law, Daniel Lobdy of Deal, as well.

So George Fox sailed away with his companions, having a few days later

A very fine Gale all night [and passing] the Lizard, foure Leagues South of it, and in a little time saw the Land's End.

Not long after this, William Penn also sailed away, but in the opposite direction: East, not West. Even yet the way was not "clear" for his marriage to Gulielma: "Service of Truth" must still, as ever, come first. In that service, Penn crossed to the Continent "on a Missionary Journey of Love," to visit the small groups of Friends in Holland and Germany who had been already convinced by William Caton, himself the convincer of Luke Howard of Dover. No account of this short visit paid by Penn to the Continent remains; but an allusion in a later letter to a Dr. Hasbert, a physician of Emden, makes it probable that he reached that place at this time.

My love is to thy wife and salute me kindly to those who were at Meeting when I visited Embden. (Folio Penn, i, p. 156.)

This probably refers to a visit paid in 1671. Here at Emden Penn succeeded in starting a Meeting of Friends that has ever since regarded him as its founder.

(Almost as these words were being written came the news that British bombers had partially destroyed this Free City. 1944.)

Though George Fox has sailed away for the present out of our picture, it makes a pleasant pendant to this sunset farewell scene to remember that on his return home to England, nearly two years later, he was welcomed at Bristol (June 1673) by the Penns as well as by his own home party.

His Journal records:

Margarett and Thomas Lower and Sarah Fell and Rachel Fell came uppe to Bristoll: to mee out of the North and J: Rouse and William Pen and his wiffe: and Ger: Roberts came downe from London to see us: and many Friends from different parts of the nation came to see us at the Fayre. And the Lords Infinite Power and life was over all. . . . (*Camb. Jnl.*, ii, p. 259.)

The transposition of “up” and “down” sounds odd to modern ears. The important fact to be noted, however, is that Gulielma is “Guly” no longer, but is mentioned in her new matronly dignity as “William Penn’s wife.” It is time, therefore, to turn back to their marriage in 1672.

BOOK SIX

“GULI PENN”

“*A Match of Providence's Making*”—W. PENN

Chapter One

MARRIAGE

“A heavenly and spiritual joyning”—GEORGE FOX

THE presence of William Penn and his bride, Gulielma Springett, still seems to haunt the old-world withdrawing-room at King John's Farm, Chorley Wood, in Hertfordshire. Here their marriage took place on 4 May 1672. A contemporary diary says:

4th of 2nd mo. They took each other in marriage at Chorlewood, at a farmhouse called King's, where Friends Meeting [for worship] was then kept, being in the parish of Rickmansworth . . .

King John's Farm to-day is a “well-executed reproduction of a Jacobean manor-house . . .” and “must be four times the size of the original building,” with nothing farm-like about it. It has been altered and enlarged time after time. Yet a vague tradition in the neighbourhood says that originally it was a royal hunting-box, long before the seventeenth century, though nothing remains to recall this. Only the panelled room, with its low ceiling and long windows opening on to clipped yew-trees and a grassy lawn, still seems to hoard a memory of its one immortal moment on that May morning nearly three hundred years ago.

Ancient houses often do this. Time, rolling over them, obliterating many memories, yet seems to leave one essential episode too deeply etched to perish. Swarthmoor Hall in the North of England never quite forgets the first arrival of George Fox, “the Man in the White Hat,” in June 1652. Tregangeeves Farm in the West, in spite of its prim Victorian exterior, still retains the remembrance, hidden away in its stones, of Loveday

Hambly welcoming her guests to what was then "the central hearth of Friends in Cornwall." Nearer to our own day, Earlham Hall in Norfolk is still essentially and for all time the home where, as one of the seven Gurney sisters, Elizabeth Fry grew to womanhood. Thus the withdrawing-room at King John's Farm hardly needs the oil painting of the youthful William Penn over the mantelpiece to remind the beholder that this is indeed hallowed ground, since it was here that the long betrothal of William Penn and Gulielma Springett culminated at last in their sacred union.

No knowledge of the actual meeting remains; only the words, in the handwriting of Thomas Ellwood, that "they took each other in a godly sort and manner according to the good old order and practice of the Church of Christ."

The original register entry is still at Somerset House, in the handwriting of Thomas Ellwood, and bearing names not only of the bride and bridegroom but also of the forty-six witnesses who were present.

Janet Whitney's moving description of John Woolman's bridal, a century later, is surely in place here. It is the ideal Quaker wedding scene, when Time becomes irrelevant and Eternity is all. Her account may fitly be inserted here:

Quietly as a flower she came in by her lover's side and passed between the silent waiting forms. . . . This was the time to remember heaven in the deep quiet with her heart's hope realised.

There was no one needed to give a Quaker maid away. She gave herself. And there was no call in the meeting for any who knew cause why these should not be joined in matrimony to speak now or for ever after hold his peace. Thorough investigation had been made beforehand, and chance interference was not allowed for.¹

¹ "Thorough investigation" had indeed been made beforehand, in two Sessions of the Monthly Meeting held at Thomas Ellwood's house at Hunger Hill, near Amersham. Here the young couple had appeared and at the first one had "announced their intention of marriage"; and a month later received the answer which was the consent and approbation of the Meeting. The record of both these Meetings, as well as two copies of the marriage certificate, are all in Ellwood's careful script, written by him as Clerk of the Monthly Meeting. Then, as now, the preliminaries to a marriage "according to the manner of Friends" are deliberate in the extreme. Possibly this is why, until quite recent years, divorce has been almost unknown in the Society.

Silence, deep and restful, deep and holy, spread above them and around them like a sea. They sank into it with love and prayer and felt the Presence of the Father who united the living and the dead. Then [the mutual promises of love and faithfulness having been exchanged] they sat down together, hand in hand, never again to be parted. Distance might do its worst on many journeys, and ocean seas, and even death itself; but their bond was of a kind not to be put asunder.¹

Earlier in this same seventeenth century, in very different surroundings, a very different man, Doctor John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's, had also written a marriage blessing—as suitable for a marriage in a Quaker parlour or meeting-house as for a ceremony in his great cathedral:

May the God of Heaven so join you that you may rejoice and be glad in Him all your days. And when He, Who doth now join you, shall separate you again, may He stablish your hearts with the assurance that He hath but borrowed one of you for a time, to make both more perfect in the Day of Resurrection.

In after years William Penn preached a wedding sermon in old Devonshire House in London, entitled "Two made One, or the happiness of marrying in the Lord." He knew.

Shortly after the wedding, William Penn took his bride to their new home, Basing House, at Rickmansworth, six miles away, driving there in a new "coach" he had purchased for the occasion. Besse, in his dry way, says "pitching upon a convenient habitation at Rickmansworth in Hertfordshire he resided there with his family, often visiting the meetings of Friends and returning home again." And of Gulielma herself: "She was a Young Woman whom a Virtuous disposition, joined to a Comely Personage rendered well accomplished." The house to which William Penn brought his bride is still to be seen, but only as a palimpsest where the earliest home of their married life is hidden under modern municipal reconstruction. Yet enough remains to show that it must have been a dignified as well as a joyful abode, with a garden for Gulielma to tend. Yet, even in these first months of wedlock, "Service

¹ *John Woolman, Quaker*, by Janet Whitney, English edition, p. 148.

of Truth" must come first. Less than six months after the marriage William Penn felt impelled to go on a missionary journey to visit the scattered Friends in Kent and Sussex. A letter from the Governor of Sheerness Castle mentions that:

This place affordes none (news) but that sr William Penns sonn a Renowned Quaker and Two or three Brethren moore are very busy in the wilde of Kent in planting their Gospell and elightening that dark Country wch is the receptacle of all sisme and Rebellion a gentleman of this Country told me this newes yesterday and that these Impostures have numerous Companies following them.

Sr I am yr most humble and ever obliged Servt.

A. Darrell.

[Addressed] For the Honorble Sr Joseph Williamson one of the Clarkes of His Matties Most Honorble Privy Councell at Whitehall. [and endorsed] Sheernesse Aug. 6. 1672. Major Darrell." (*State Papers*, p. 356.)

Penn's own account of this journey exists in manuscript in America, and is the property of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, by whose courtesy it was printed in 1944 by H. J. Cadbury, who has now generously supplied the relevant parts to be reprinted here.¹ Strangely enough, Penn dates the journey as in September and October, whereas Major Darrell, in the letter quoted above, seems to have had news of it already in August. But this discrepancy cannot now be resolved. Penn's own account begins:

It being in my Heart to devote myself to the service of my God in a way of visit to his People in the Countries of Kent and Sussex (as it had for some time upon me) on the 8th day of the 7th month in the year 1672 I left my own House at Rickmansworth & my dearest Wife at Watford both in Heartfordshire, in order to my said journey. My company was my Bro. J. P. [John Penington] and W. G. [William Gibson] at whose house in London I lodged that night.

Here "W. G." left them and Alexander Parker took his place. Lady Penn, the Admiral's widow, was then living at Watford, so it seems likely that Gulielma was left with her.

¹ *P.M.H.B.*, October 1944.

A daily diary of the tour follows. At one place:

There came a young Ruffin [ruffian] son to the defunct Earl of Lindsey, he was high, peremtory, knowing, but pragmatrical he often run out into unhandsome expressions against us, & very wicked epithits he gave the Light, but God's power was over him, & he fell mightily under, in so much, that he came creeping in at Night, confessing to what had been said to him at noon, acknowledging his mistake and unhandsomeness, & promising to be at Meeting next Day, being the First Day.

At Sandwich, where "it rained and was very dirty," they were joined by Luke Howard, the Shoemaker of Dover, who took them to his home there as his guests, after one night spent at Deal.

The next Day we had a strong and sound Meeting, and was of good report among those that came, and there were many Professors and others. The next Day we left Dover, for Faulkstone, and that Day had a precious, sweet and Heavenly Meeting, whether the Priest came, was quiet, & Several Professors, some came from Dover, never at a Meeting before. . . .

For about ten days Luke Howard seems to have accompanied the party till they all came to Ashford, where

contrary to my desire though according to my fear, the Town came crowding in, in so violent a manner, that people were forc'd to go out for breath, the parler, Kitchen, Entry, Garden etc. were cram'd. The Lord was with us and the Way to the Everlasting Kingdom was declared in the Demonstration of Power and Spirit as many confessed that they were never at Meetings before. . . .

The following day Luke Howard left them "for home," i.e. Dover; but the others continued the tour. Only after almost a month of this arduous service did they feel "clear" to return home. This was after a meeting at Reigate, where

the Lord sealed up our Labours and Travills according to the Desire of my Soul and Spirit with his heavenly refreshments and sweet living Power and Word of Life unto the reaching of all and consolating our own Hearts abundantly: After Meeting thus clear of our work it rise in the Liberty and sweet Love

of the Lord in both our Hearts to go home to our Dear Wives and Families, which we accomplisht that Day so that dear A. P. left me 5 miles on London Rode from Rigat . . . & I went by Kingston (where I stay'd one Houre) cross the country to my Dear Wife and got home before the 7th hour in the evening being about 20 miles. . . .

And thus hath the Lord been with us in all our Travells for his Truth, and with his blessings of Peace are we returned. . . .

Laus Deo in aeternum.

The End.

And so, all the better probably for this short separation "on Truth's service," the home life together at Rickmansworth was resumed.

These first years of wedlock have been called "the halcyon period of Penn's career, one of hope and cheer, in spite of the sorrows that accompanied the joys of his domestic life"—the deaths of his first three infant children, and the passing of his only brother, Richard Penn, under his roof in April 1673. The loss of these babes must have been a bitter blow to the parents. Even to-day the sight of their tombstone in the burial-ground at Jordans has a pathos that never grows old. Perhaps Gulielma's intrepid horsemanship, and the way she occasionally accompanied her husband on his long riding journeys, even after her marriage, was too much for her strength. Or possibly her mother's (Lady Springett's) intense sufferings both of mind and body at her husband's death-bed at Arundel, shortly before Gulielma's own birth, had left some delicacy that revealed itself when the daughter's own time for motherhood came.

A touching letter from William to George Fox, shortly before the birth of their third short-lived babe, says: "my wife is toward a little one." Again, after the birth of the child, he writes:

10th 10th mo. 1674. . . . Dear George, things are pretty quiet, and meetings very full and precious, and living, blessed be the Lord for ever. . . . my wife is well and child; only teeth, she has one cut.

This child was Margaret, named after Lady Penn. Her elder brother and sister (twins) had already died before her birth, Gulielma Maria only a few weeks old and William at the age of about twelve months.

Therefore when, for the fourth time, Gulielma was expecting to become a mother, Penn not unnaturally decided to make a new start. He took her away from Rickmansworth, with all its sorrowful as well as joyful associations. After a few months spent at his mother, Lady Penn's, home at Walthamstow, where their fourth child, Springett, was born, he took her back to her father's county of Sussex. Here, in 1676, he purchased Worminghurst Place, which earlier in the century had belonged to the Shelley family, ancestors of the poet. Here, at "the neat and pleasant house" of Worminghurst, they made their home.

In spite of past sorrows, the next few years were spent in happiness and comparative peace. Details of William and Gulielma's everyday life have come down to us:

The hours and habits at Worminghurst were those of people whose life was in religion and in service. In summer they rose at five, in winter at seven, in spring and autumn at six: a real daylight saving arrangement. They had breakfast at nine, dinner at twelve, supper at seven and to bed at ten. They assembled with the servants for worship in the morning; and at eleven to make a recess in the work of the forenoon they met again for reading the Bible and other religious books. At six in the evening they met again for religious worship. . . . After supper the servants reported on what they had done, and received orders for the next day. "Loud discourse and troublesome noise were forbidden. All quarrels were to be made up before bedtime." (Graham, p. 144.)

With Gulielma's marriage to William Penn she enters English history. There is no need to retell the events of those well-known years when she shared her husband's fortunes, always, though unmentioned, either by his side or presiding over his home. Still, occasionally, she emerges as a distinct figure. "William Penn and his wife" are distinctly mentioned once when among the group of Friends at Bristol, assembled to

welcome George Fox back to England in 1673 on his return from his journey to America. Janney says they had been on a journey to the West of England. A few months later, Fox and his wife and her youngest daughter, Rachel Fell, also paid the Penns a visit before their removal from Rickmansworth. Here Thomas Lower also joined them. This makes again a delightful group of the persons whose lives we have been studying, with the Peningtons as the chief absentees. From Basing House they all proceeded to Armscott, where Fox was apprehended with Thomas Lower and taken to his last imprisonment in Worcester Gaol. This imprisonment, which lasted for more than a year, prevented him from visiting his mother, Mary Fox, on her death-bed. He was on his way to see her when he was captured. William Penn, distressed for his friend and leader, went himself to court in 1673, "for the first time in five years," to plead for his release. It was largely through his influence with Charles II and later with James II that Fox was at length set free and never again arrested.

A well-known anecdote, which cannot however be traced earlier than to a date a generation after Penn's death, is related by his biographer Janney as follows:

When William Penn was convinced of the principles of Friends, and became a frequent attendant at their meetings, he did not immediately relinquish his gay apparel; it is even said that he wore a sword, as was then customary among men of rank and fashion. Being one day in company with George Fox, he asked his advice concerning it, saying that he might perhaps appear singular among Friends, but his sword had once been the means of saving his life without injuring his antagonist, and moreover that Christ had said "he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." George Fox answered, "I advise thee to wear it as long as thou canst." Not long after this they met again, when William had no sword, and George said to him, "William, where is thy sword?" "Oh," said he, "I have taken thy advice; I wore it as long as I could." (Janney, Chap. III.)

Two other anecdotes, characteristic of Penn, have been handed down, one of about this time, and one later.

On one occasion, coming to Reading to attend Meeting, several Friends spoke to William Penn after Meeting saying they should be glad of his company to dine, but feared they had not suitable accommodation or provision, etc., for him. At last, a plain, honest woman asked him to her house, saying she could furnish all he could require. W. P. accepted her invitation and accompanied her to her very humble dwelling, in which was a small shop where she sold provisions, etc. She took thence some bread, butter and cheese, and W. Penn made a very sufficient dinner, much enjoyed his visit, and, at parting, heartily thanked her for her hospitality and especially for her cordial kindness and hearty welcome.

On another occasion coming to Reading and being about to proceed thence to London in order to attend at the Court of James II., as was his frequent practice, several Friends manifested their uneasiness at his being so much at Court, expressing their fears that in such a place, and in such company, he would be in great danger of departing from that simplicity of demeanour which Friends believed it their duty to maintain.

W. Penn, after listening to their observations, expressed his wish to take one of their number with him to the Court of James, and one of them accordingly accompanied him thither. Being duly introduced, he remained with him during the whole time, thus having a full opportunity of observing the tenour of W. P.'s carriage, as well towards the king as toward others with whom he came in contact. Finding that his conduct, mode of address and general demeanour were quite in harmony with his profession and practice as a Friend, he was entirely satisfied and was thus put in a position to allay the uneasiness of such of his friends as had entertained doubts on this head.¹

In 1676 both William and Gulielma Penn seem to have spent some time in the North of England. Of this no record remains except the following entries in *The Household Account Book of Sarab Fell of Swarthmoor Hall*.² All the entries date from 1676.

		s. d.
April 2nd	By mo. pd Bro. Lower when he went with William Penn to Jno Blaiklins	10

¹ *J.F.H.S.*, xix, p. 31.

² Edited by Norman Penney, F.S.A. (Cambridge University Press, 1920.)

s. d

April 13th	[after a delightful entry] By mo. pd for shoeing my horse called Robin 11d. [comes]		
	By mo. pd for 1 Lettr to W. Penn	1	2
April 16th	By mo. pd Rob Briggs for a fatt sheepe when Willm Penn was here Mothers acct	7	6
May 26th	By mo. pd Jane Gregg for meale made into breade, a coard etc: sent to William Penn's wife	2	6
July 4th	By mo. pd Jno Kennett for carrieinge the bing to Cartmell etc. sent Guly Penn breade in		6
Sept. 24th	By mo. pd Jno Morehouse for makeinge a straw case sent with breade in, to Guly Penn		4

If this hypothesis be correct, it is a pleasant, hitherto unrecorded, incident in Gulielma's life. John Blaikling of Drawwell was a notable figure among the early Quakers of the North.¹

Additional information about the Penns in 1677 has come to light with the publication of the *Haistwell Diary*². This is a short journal of Fox's travels in company with William Penn and others, in Holland and Germany in 1677-8. But it also records among other things a visit to the Penns' home at Worminghurst before he left England:

And on the 20th day [of June 1677] G. F., and John Burnyeat and several other Friends passed from London with Willm. Penn in order to go to his house: and as they went thorow Surry they hearing of a Quarterly Meeting (not farr out of the way) went to It: and after the Meeting was done they passed

¹ See *Beginnings*, p. 84, etc., and *Q. S.*, p. 343.

² The *Haistwell Diary* itself is written in an excellent hand, in a small book about 8 inches by 3, the cover having once been a portion of an illuminated missal for the service of the Mass, words and music, doubtless of much earlier date than the book. It came into the possession of Friends Reference Library from the library of the late William Edward Forster in 1922, and was printed, with two other Journals relating to George Fox, as a fitting commemoration of his tercentenary, in 1925. The name of the scribe is not given but there seems every reason to believe that it was written by Edward Haistwell. From the loving way in which he speaks of him as "my dear and ever-loving Master" or "My Master" or more generally simply as "he," the diarist was evidently a devoted disciple of the great leader.

on their Journey to Willm. Penns at Worminghorst in Sussex; where several Friends came to visit him. And on the 24th day being the 1st day of the week G. F. passed from thence to Friends Meeting, and after the Meeting returned to W. P.s again.

And on the 28: day G. F. was at a Large meeting at W. P.s which was very peaceable.

And on the 8th of the 5th month being the 1st day of the week: there was a meeting at W.P.s where there was many Fds as also several hundreds of people: at which meetinge G. F. and Isaac Penington & George Keith & John Burnyeat and W. P. declared the truth, all being very peaceable.

And the week following W. P. and G. K. & R. Barclay & S. Smith had meetings up and down the country amongst Friends many people coming in to meetings Insomuch that the Justices threatened to prosecute Friends. And on the 12th of the 5th month [July] there was a meeting at W. P.s where there was several hundreds of people and the Informers had told Friends that they would come to the meeting; and several Friends when they came to the Meeting told G. F. what the Informers had said: and he bid them bee Chearfull, and not fear them so G. F. walked into the Garden, and when the Meeting was settled: hee went into the meeting where several Friends did declare the truth: after whom G. F. declared some houres: but no Informers did appear and so the Meeting ended in peace.

And on the 13: day G. F. and J. Burnyeat: taking leave with W. P.s family passed from thence . . . W. P. accompanying G. F. 12 miles in his Coach, and then they took leave.

Yet though this particular meeting ended peaceably and no informers came to disturb it, Friends were often and repeatedly harassed. A few years before this, in 1670, "Sir John Robinson, Governor of the Tower, did his best (or worst) to scatter the Friends—forms and tables were taken away, but Friends met to worship, standing. Friends' hats were swept off and thrown over an adjoining wall." (*Short Jnl.*, note on p. 302.)

but neither the loss of their forms nor their hats could prevent Friends from meeting, so Sir John destroyed the house, yet Friends met upon the ruins and then restored their building.

And all this, be it remembered, had been going on for more than twenty years, ever since the first persecutions in the early

days of the Society in the 1650's. This long-continued harrying of Friends, year after year, and even decade after decade, is a background fact of Quaker history all too easily forgotten. A. Neave Brayshaw reminds his readers that all of us too often forget how long the persecution of the Quakers lasted, and that when the end finally came with the Toleration Act in 1689

it was only just in time to prevent the Society from being extinguished altogether, as it actually was extinguished in some places, notably the Isle of Man, through the severe measures taken.

The entries in the *Haistwell Diary*, above quoted, with their records of long visits from staying guests, and meetings of hundreds of people in a private house, are surely a testimony to Gulielma's prowess as a housekeeper and therefore belong to our story. Later entries of Penn's travels with Fox in Germany and Holland, and their intercourse with Princess Elizabeth at Herford, and other well-known people, however interesting and valuable in themselves, do not belong to this book.

Chapter Two

ABSENCE

“My Wife is sweetly consenting and satisfied”

IN 1681 Penn wrote concerning Pennsylvania: “I can say that I had an opening of joy as to these parts in the year 1661 at Oxford, twenty years since.” (Janney.)

This must have been when he was a student at Christchurch. John William Graham says:

The undergraduate’s dream of liberty in a new Utopia made him ready to grasp the opportunity when it came.

In 1680 all his efforts on behalf of religious toleration seemed to have been in vain. He could not know that they were to bear fruit a few years later in the Toleration Act, which at length afforded a breathing space for his harried fellow-pilgrims.

To himself in 1680 these efforts seemed to be fruitless. His appeals to king, judges, parliaments, Anglicans, Protestants, all the electors and inhabitants of England seemed to have been in vain. Persecution continued rampant, fines, confiscation of property, flogging, confinement in stocks, banishment, imprisonment even with death, were still endured by his long-suffering fellow-Quakers. . . .

There followed his last despairing cry: “There is no hope in England: the deaf adder cannot be charmed,” but with it came the resolution to try his Holy Experiment in the forests of the New World. . . . Penn turned to his fellow-Quakers, hopeless of establishing religious liberty at home, and led them across the sea to found a great Commonwealth dedicated to both political and religious liberty. (Hull, pp. 215–16.)

“For my country I eyed the Lord in obtaining it,” he said himself. But this meant leaving home, and children, and wife.

On 4 March 1681 the King affixed his signature to a deed

granting Penn the province he desired. The next day Penn wrote as follows to his friend Robert Turner, a merchant of Dublin:

5th of 1st mo. 1681.

Dear Friend, . . .

After many waitings, watchings, solicitings and disputes in Council, this day my country was confirmed to me under the great seal of England, with large powers and privileges by the name of Pennsylvania; a name the King would give it in honour of my father. I proposed New Wales, but the Secretary, Welshman, refused to have it called New Wales Sylvania. Then, instead of Wales they added *Penn* to it. Though I much opposed it, and went to the King to have it struck out and altered, he said it was past, and he would take it upon him; nor could twenty guineas move the Under-Secretary to vary the name. I feared lest it should be looked upon as a vanity in me, and not respect, as it truly was, in the King to my father, whom he often mentions with praise. (Janney, Chap. XII.)

A few months later, shortly before sailing, William wrote to his honoured friend Margaret Fox:

Dear Margaret,

I am a-going . . . Oh may the Lord be with us, and keep us in our several places, and do us good for ever. Dear George I left yesterday at Enfield, much better. My soul loves him beyond expression and his dear love and care and counsel are in my heart. A sweet parting we had. So dear Margaret, and dear Thomas Lower, let me hear from you, that I may rejoice in your love. I have nought else to add but my wife's dear love, who is sweetly consenting and satisfied.

Thy very loving friend and brother, Wm. Penn.
London. 14th of 6th month 1682. (Webb, pp. 343-4.)

"Sweetly consenting" Gulielma may have been, but her "satisfaction" in her husband's departure is more doubtful. It evidently was out of the question for her to accompany him, not only because of her own young children but also from the state of her mother's health. Mary Penington's chequered life ended shortly after William had sailed.

He himself clearly felt that the parting might be for ever. Before leaving he "made provision for his family as if he were

never to see them again," and also wrote long epistles for their guidance in after months or years should he not live to return.

My dear Wife and Children

My love, which neither sea nor land, nor death itself can extinguish or lessen towards you, most endearingly visits you with Eternal embraces and will bide with you for ever; and may the God of my life watch over you and bless you and do you good in this world and for ever. Some things are upon my spirit to leave with you in your respective capacities, as I am to the one a husband, and to the rest a father, if I should never see you again in this world.

My dear wife! Remember thou wast the love of my youth, and much the joy of my life; the most beloved, as well as the most worthy of my earthly comforts; and the reason of that love was more thy inward than thy outward excellencies, which yet were many. God knows, and thou knowest it, I can say it was a match of Providence's making; and God's image in us both was the first thing, and the most amiable and engaging ornament in our eyes. Now I am to leave thee, and that without knowing whether I shall ever see thee more in this world, take my counsel into thy bosom, and let it dwell with thee in my stead while thou livest.

First: let the fear of the Lord, and a zeal and love for his glory dwell richly in thy heart; and thou wilt watch for good over thyself and thy dear children and family, that no rude, light or bad thing be committed: else God will be offended and he will repent himself of the good he intends thee and thine.

Secondly: be diligent in meetings for worship and business; stir up thyself and others therein; it is thy duty and place; and let meetings be kept once a day in the family to wait upon the Lord, who has given us much time for ourselves; and, my dearest, to make thy family matters easy to thee, divide thy time and be regular; it is easy and sweet; thy retirement will afford thee to do it; as in the morning to view the business of the house, and fix it as thou desirest, seeing all to be in order; that by thy counsel all may move, and to thee tender an account every evening. The time for work, for walking, for meals, may be certain, at least as near as may be; and grieve not thyself with careless servants; they will disorder thee; rather pay them and let them go, if they will not better by admonition; this is best to avoid many words, which I know wound the soul and offend the Lord.

Reading between the lines of this tender injunction reveals much of Gulielma's character in these days of her early married life. Clearly she was apt to be rather casual and unbusinesslike in her ways; and to worry over small affairs. Perhaps too to chide her servants unnecessarily, to fuss over trifles and then to suffer from it in health—very human and delightfully unheroic.

Thirdly: Cast up thy income, and see what it daily amounts to; by which thou mayest be sure to have it in thy sight and power to keep within compass; and I beseech thee to live low and sparingly, till my debts are paid [This may make some other wives smile!] and then enlarge as thou seest it convenient. Remember thy mother's example when thy father's public-spiritedness had worsted his estate (which is my case.) I know thou lovest plain things, and art averse to the pomps of the world—a nobility natural to thee. I write, not as doubtful, but to quicken thee for my sake, to be more vigilant herein; knowing that God will bless thy care, and thy poor children and thee for it. My mind is wrapped up in a saying of thy father's. "I desire not riches but to owe nothing;" and truly that is wealth, and more than enough to live is a snare attended with many sorrows. I need not bid thee be humble, for thou art so; nor meek and patient, for it is much of thy natural disposition; but I pray thee be often in retirement with the Lord, and guard against encroaching friendships. Keep them at arms' length; for it is giving away our power—ay, and self too, into the possession of another; and that which may seem engaging in the beginning may prove a heavy yoke and burden too hard and heavy in the end. Wherefore keep dominion over thyself, and let thy children, good meetings and Friends, be the pleasure of thy Life.

This last counsel is surprising. It does not fit in with anything otherwise known of Gulielma, either in youth or later life, that she should need her husband's solemn warning against entangling friendships (what the Germans call *Schwärmereien*) when she had reached the mature age of nearly forty. Henry Goldney's appreciation of "W.P.'s wife . . . a virtuous woman with a noble regard to truth . . ." ¹ and with "the advantage of a temper not easily moved to extremes" harmonizes much better with what is otherwise known of her. Is it possible that

¹ *Q.P.-B.*, p. 55.

even William Penn suffered from a little natural jealousy of anyone else enjoying her friendship while he was far away? The stipulation to "keep to Friends" shows that the caution certainly was not aimed at the faithful Thomas Ellwood. Anyhow it is too personal and human a trait, whether it betokens causeless jealousy in the husband, or undue impulsiveness in the wife, to be omitted from a true portrait of them.

From her responsibilities as wife and mistress of his household, the departing husband next turns to her duties as mother of his children:

Fourthly: And now, my dearest, let me recommend to thy care my dear children: abundantly beloved of me, as the Lord's blessings, and the sweet pledges of our mutual and endeared affection. Above all things, endeavour to breed them up in the love of virtue and that holy, plain way of it which we have lived in, that the world in no part of it get into my family. I had rather they were homely than finely bred as to outward behaviour: yet I love sweetness, mixed with gravity, and cheerfulness tempered with sobriety. Religion in the heart leads into this true civility, teaching men and women to be mild and courteous in their behaviour—an accomplishment worthy indeed of praise.

Fifthly: next breed them up in a love of one another; tell them it is the charge I left behind me. . . . For their learning be liberal. Spare no cost; for by such parsimony all is lost that is saved; but let it be useful knowledge, such as is consistent with truth and godliness, not cherishing a vain conversation or idle mind, but ingenuity mixed with industry is good for the body and mind too. I recommend the useful parts of mathematics, as building houses or ships, measuring, surveying, dialling, navigation; but agriculture is specially in my eye; let my children be husbandmen and housewives; it is industrious, healthy, honest, and of good example . . . It is commendable in the princes of Germany and the nobles of that empire that they have all their children instructed in some useful occupation. Rather keep an ingenious person in the house to teach them than send them to schools, too many evil impressions being commonly received there. Be sure to observe their genius and do not cross it as to learning; let them not dwell too long on one thing; but let their change be agreeable, and all their diversions have some little bodily labour in them.

When grown big, have most care for them; for then there are more snares, both within and without. When marriageable, see that they have worthy persons in their eye, of good life, and good fame for piety and understanding. I need no wealth but sufficiency and be sure that their love be dear, fervent, and mutual, that it may be happy for them. I choose not that they should be married to earthly, covetous kindred; and of cities and towns of concourse beware; the world is apt to stick close to those who have lived and got wealth there; a country life and estate I like best for my children. I prefer a decent mansion, of an hundred pounds per annum, before ten thousand pounds in London, or such like place, in a way of trade.

In fine, my dear, endeavour to breed them dutiful to the Lord, and his blessed light, truth and grace in their hearts, who is their Creator, and his fear will grow up with them. . . .

Then follow lengthy counsels to the children, but these do not concern us here except as they lead up to a few sentences describing Gulielma herself.

. . . You are now beginning to live! What would not some give for your time. Oh! I could have lived better, were I, as you, in the flower of youth. Therefore love and fear the Lord, and keep close to meetings, and delight to wait on the Lord God of your father and mother, among his despised people, as we have done; and count it your honour to be members of that society, and heirs of that living fellowship which is enjoyed among them, for the experience of which your father's soul blesseth the Lord for ever.

Next, be obedient to your dear mother, a woman whose virtue and good name is an honour to you; for she hath been exceeded by none in her time for her plainness, integrity, industry, humanity, virtue, and good understanding—qualities not usual among women of her worldly condition and quality. Therefore honour and obey her, my dear children, as your mother and your father's love and delight; nay, love her too, for she loved your father with a deep and upright love, choosing him before all her many suitors; and though she be of a delicate constitution and noble spirit, yet she descended to the utmost tenderness and care for you, performing the painfulest acts of service for you in your infancy, as a mother and a nurse too. I charge you, before the Lord, honour and obey, love and cherish your dear mother. . . .

So farewell to my thrice dearly beloved wife and children!—

Yours, as God pleaseth, in that which no waters can quench
no time forget, nor distance wear away, but remains for ever,
William Penn

Worminghurst fourth of sixth month. 1682. (Janney,
Chap. XIV.)

These lengthy counsels were probably composed and written on land. They were intended for the children's use in after years if their father never returned home again. Besides them, however, there are three short notes, one for each of his three children, all written on a single sheet of paper on board ship just before the *Welcome* had left the Downs. These are as follows, and were evidently meant to be delivered at once:

My dear Springet

Be good, learn to fear God, avoide evil, love thy book, be kind to thy Brother and Sister and God will bless thee & I will exceedingly love thee farewell Dear Child

Thy Dear Father

Wm. Penn

19th 6mo. 82

my love to all the Famely and to Friends.

Dear Lætitia

I dearly love thee, and would have thee sober, learn thy book and love thy Brothers. I will send thee a pretty Book to learn in. The Lord bless thee and make a good woman of thee, farewell.

Thy Dear Father

Wm. Penn

19th 6 mo. 82

my love to the famely.

Dear Bille

I love thee much, therefore be Sober and quiet, & learn his book. I will send him one. So the Lord bless thee. Amen.

Thy dr Father

Wm. Penn.

19th 6mo. 82.

my love to all the Famely.

(See facsimile in Myers, p. 71.)

These tender love-notes to his young children are more moving, some will feel, and bring him nearer to our hearts than any other incident in Penn's long career.

Then he sailed away, embarking
at Deal, in the *Welcome*, a vessel of 300 tons burden, carrying 100 colonists, mostly Friends from the south of England with all their movable chattels. (Graham, p. 152.)

Think of crossing the Atlantic, even in summer-time, in such a tiny craft, and with such a number of passengers! The voyage took about two months. This was not considered unduly long in those days, but it was complicated by a bad outbreak of smallpox, the germ of which had been carried on board at Deal. William Penn himself escaped and was indefatigable in nursing and caring for the sick and dying. His immunity, both in this outbreak and in the Great Plague, may have been the result of his previous attack of the malady when a baby. No less than thirty of the little company died and were buried at sea—a grievous loss, especially to the leader, who felt himself responsible for the whole undertaking.

Their arrival on the other side of the Atlantic is too well known to need retelling here. Our concern is with his wife left behind at home, to carry on “in that plain and holy way of living” she and her husband had started together at Worminghurst.

The year 1682 was a sad one for Gulielma. William’s mother, Lady Penn, had died early in 1682, some months before her son’s departure. Gulielma’s own mother died two weeks after he sailed. It was at Worminghurst on 18th September that Mary Penington’s eventful life ended when she was nearly sixty. Her husband, Isaac Penington, had passed away three years before, in 1679. Apparently she had been in poor health for some time. Her will, made soon after her husband’s death, is a revealing document, and shows in various small details the same well-balanced, fair-minded yet tender nature that her early writings portray. She leaves most of her personal property in land to her children by her second husband, the young Peningtons, but is careful to explain:

As my daughter Penn hath a large proportion of this world’s substance and my latter children have not anything, I find it my duty to provide for them.

She leaves, however,

to my daughter Gulielma Maria Penn, her choice of a suit of damask except that suit marked I. M. P.

This was table linen, probably, and the "suit" not to be offered to Gulielma bears the initials of Isaac and Mary Penington and must therefore descend in their own family. But "My daughter Penn" being so much the eldest, her mother says:

I would have my daughter Penn dispose of my hoods scrafs [*sic*] gloves safeguard cloakes¹ and such things to the women friends of our meeting.

Mary Penington also leaves

20 £ towards a meeting house when friends of Chalfont meeting think it convenient to build one. [And, most especially,] I would have my son John Penington lay me in Friends burying ground at Jordans very near my dear and precious husband Isaac Penington, and I would only be accompanied with the friends of our own meeting privately.

A serene and blessed close. One valuable legacy, not mentioned in her will, was the diary of her early days, already largely quoted. A copy of this manuscript, loosely stitched into brown paper covers, was composed of fifty-four pages of letter paper. It now bears the following inscription on the first page:

Nathaniel Williams, his book, 1755, copy'd by his Father from the Original Manuscript, which lay conceal'd near forty years behind the Wainscot'g of a Room at William Penn's house at Warminghurst in Sussex.

Mary Penington states (*Experiences*, p. 48) that her manuscript was first written in, or before, 1668, but added to at various dates up to 1680/1. The other account "for her grandson, Springett Penn" is dated "about the year 1680," and "Left to be delivered to him after her death."

¹ In *The Quaker, a Study in Costume*, by Amelia Mott Gummere, a "safeguard" is said to be "an outside petticoat of heavy linen or woollen stuff, worn over other skirts to protect them from mud in riding on horseback." This may explain the allusion to "wet weather garments" on p. 102.

Chapter Three

SOLITUDE

“They that love beyond the World cannot be separated by it”
—WILLIAM PENN

THUS her husband's absence and her mother's death left Gulielma very solitary, with no near older relative to lean on, or to advise her as to the care of her three young children. And her own health was poor. Throughout her married life, as has been seen, she seems never to have been really strong, and was often actually ailing. A smaller-minded woman might have made her lack of physical strength a reason for holding back her husband from his tremendous enterprise in another hemisphere; but Gulielma showed that she had truly inherited the courage of both her parents.

And though she was to be bereft of both husband and mother, two unfailing friends remained, to stand by and support her during the three slow years of her husband's absence. The first of these, needless to say, was the ever-faithful Thomas Ellwood, not far off at Hunger Hill.

There is a pleasurable surprise in learning that her other refuge was found in the motherly heart of Margaret Fox, in her distant home in the North. Of this later.

Meanwhile, Thomas Ellwood's scholarly pen again takes up the thread of the story. It is to him that we owe the knowledge of one dramatic episode that took place in 1683, a year after William Penn's departure.

Thomas himself was at this time having trouble with the authorities on account of a treatise he had recently published. In this he begged the Justices to “deal fairly with the Quakers in their Meetings” and “pay no heed to wild ideas about them from sawcy Informers.”

The rest of the story, though told in his usual jog-trot narrative, must be given in his own words, for it enriches our knowledge of the period with various incidental details—those small details about undistinguished people that are difficult to come by, and valuable when they can be found, in a bygone age.

For it being a stormy Time, and Persecution waxing hot, upon the Conventicle-Act, through the Busy Boldness of hungry Informers, who for their own Advantage, did not only themselves hunt after religious and peaceable Meetings, but drove on the Officers, not only the more inferior and subordinate, but, in some places, even the Justices also, for fear of Penalties, to hunt with them and for them: I found a Pressure upon my Spirit to write a small Treatise, to inform such Officers how they might secure and defend themselves from being ridden by these malepert Informers and made their Drudges. . . .

This was thought to have some good Service where it came, upon such sober and moderate Officers, as well Justices, as Constables, &c as acted rather by Constraint than Choice; by encouraging them to stand their ground. . . .

But whatever Ease it brought to others, it brought me some Trouble, and had like to have brought me into more Danger, had not Providence wrought my Deliverance in an unexpected Way.

For as soon as it came forth in print, which was in the Year 1683, one William Ayrs of Watford in Hertfordshire, a Friend and an Acquaintance of mine (who was both an Apothecary and a Barber) being acquainted with divers of the Gentry in those Parts, and going often to some of their Houses to trim them, took one of these Books with him, when he went to trim Sir Benjamin Tichborn of Rickmansworth, and presented it to him, supposing he would have taken it kindly, as in like cases, he had formerly done. But it fell out otherwise. For he, looking it over after Ayrs was gone, and taking it by the wrong Handle, entertained an Evil Opinion of it, and of me for it, though he knew me not.

Is this not a delightful glimpse into the lives of humble folk? To hear of an Apothecary and Barber who goes into the country, not only "trimming the beards" of his patrons at the great houses, but also presenting them with reading matter,

light or otherwise, to entertain them while he does so, in those pre-lending library days.

He thereupon communicated both the Book and his thoughts upon it, to a neighbouring Justice living in Rickmansworth, whose name was Thomas Fotherly; who concurring with him, . . . they concluded that I should be taken up and prosecuted for it, as a seditious Book. . . . Wherefore sending for Ayrs who had brought the Book, Justice Tichborn examined him if he knew me and where I dwelt. Who telling him, he knew me well and had often been to my House; he gave him in charge to give me Notice that I should appear before him and the other Justice at Rickmansworth on such a Day; threatening that if I did not appear, he himself should be prosecuted for spreading the Book.

This put William Ayrs in a Fright. Over he came in haste with this Message to me, troubled that he should be a Means to bring me into Trouble. But I endeavoured to give him Ease, by assuring him I would not fail (with God's Leave) to appear at the Time and Place appointed, and thereby free him from Trouble or Danger.

In the Interim I received Advice, by an Express out of Sussex, that Guli Penn, with whom I had had an intimate Acquaintance and firm Friendship from our very Youths, was very dangerously ill, her husband being then absent in Pennsylvania and that she had a great Desire to see and speak with me.

This put me in a great Straight, and brought sore Exercise on my Mind. I was divided betwixt Honour and Friendship. I had engaged my word to appear before the Justices, which to omit would bring Dishonour on me and my Profession. To stay till that Time was come and past, might probably prove (if I should then be at Liberty) too late to answer her Desire and satisfy Friendship.

After some little Deliberation, I resolv'd as the best Expedient to answer both Ends, to go over next Morning to the Justices and lay my Straight before them, & try if I could procure from them a Respite of my Appearance before them, until I had been in Sussex, and paid the Duty of Friendship to my sick Friend. Which I had the more hopes to obtain, because these Justices had a great Respect for Guli. For when William Penn and she were first married, they lived for some Years at Rickmansworth, in which Time they contracted a neighbourly Friendship with both these Justices and theirs, who ever after retained a kind regard for them both.

Early therefore in the Morning I rode over, But being wholly a Stranger to the Justices, I went first to Watford, that I might take Ayrs along with me who supposed himself to have some Interest with Justice Tichborn; and when I came there, understanding that another Friend of that Town, whose name was John Wells, was well acquainted with the other Justice Fotherly; having imparted to them the Occasion of my coming, I took them both with me and hasted back to Rickmansworth. Where, having put up our Horses at an Inn, and leaving William Ayrs (who was a Stranger to Fotherly) there, I went with John Wells to Fotherly's House; & being brought into a fair Hall I tarried there while Wells went into the Parlour to him, and having acquainted him that I was there and desired to speak with him, brought him to me with Severity in his Countenance.

After he had asked me (in a Tone which spake Displeasure) what I had to say to him? I told him, I came to wait on him upon an Intimation given me that he had something to say to me. He thereupon, plucking my Book out of his Pocket, asked me If I owned myself to be the author of that Book? I told him, If he pleased to let me look at it, if it were mine, I would not deny it. He thereupon giving it into my Hand, when I had turned over the Leaves, and look'd it through, finding it to be as it came from the Press, I told him, I wrote the Book and would own it, all but the Errors of the Press. Whereupon he, looking sternly on me, answered, Your own Errors you should have said.

Having Innocency on my Side, I was not at all daunted at either his Speech or his Looks; but feeling the Lord present with me, I replied, I know there are Errors of the Press in it, and therefore I excepted them; but I do not know there is any Error of mine in it, and therefore cannot except them. But, added I, if thou pleasest to shew me any Error of mine in it, I shall readily both acknowledge and retract it. And thereupon I desired him to give me an Instance, in any one Passage in that Book, wherein he thought I had erred. He said he needed not go to Particulars; but charge me with the general Contents of the whole Book. I replied that such a charge would be too general for me to give a particular Answer to; but if he would assign me any particular Passage, or sentence in that Book wherein he apprehended the ground of Offence to lie; when I should have opened the Terms, and explained my Meaning therein, he might perhaps find Cause to change his Mind and entertain better Opinion both of the Book and me. . . .

The Justice next asked Ellwood why he came before the day

appointed for his hearing. Ellwood told him that this was not an admission of guilt:

And this I spoke with somewhat a brisker Air, which had so much Influence on him, as to bring a somewhat softer Air over his Countenance. Then going on, I told him I had a particular Occasion which induced me to come now, which was, That I received Advice last Night, by an Express out of Sussex, that William Penn's Wife (with whom I had had an intimate Acquaintance and strict Friendship *ab ipsis fere Incunabulis* [almost from the cradle], at least, *a teneris Unguiculis* [from a tender age], lay there now very ill, not without great Danger, in the Apprehension of those about her, of her Life; and that she had exprest her Desire that I would come to her, as soon as I could; the rather, for that her Husband was absent in America. That this had brought a great straight upon me, and so on, recapitulating the circumstances.

While I thus delivered myself, I observed a sensible Alteration in the Justice; and when I had done speaking he first said, He was very sorry to hear of Madam Penn's illness; of whose Virtue and Worth he spake very highly, yet not more than was her due; Then he told me That for her Sake, he would do what he could to further my Visit to her; But, said he, I am but one, and of myself can do nothing in it; therefore you must go to Sir Benjamin Tichborn, and, if he be at home, see if you can prevail with him to meet me, that we may consider of it.

But I can assure you, added he, the Matter which will be laid to your Charge is of greater Importance than you seem to think it. For your Book has been laid before the King and Council; and the Earl of Bridgewater, who is one of the Council, hath thereupon given us Command to examine you about it, and secure you.

I wish, said I, I could speak with the Earl myself; for I make no Doubt but to acquit myself unto him; And, added I, if thou pleasest to give me thy Letter to him, I will wait upon him with it forthwith. For although I know, continued I, that he hath no Favour for any of my Persuasion, yet knowing myself to be wholly innocent in this matter, I can with Confidence appear before him, or even before the King and Council. Well, said he, I see you are confident; but for all that, let me tell you, how good soever your Intention was, you timed the publishing of your Book very unluckily; for you cannot be Ignorant, that there

is a very dangerous Plot lately discovered, contrived by the Dissenters against the Government, and his Majesty's Life (This was the Rye-Plot, then newly broke forth, and laid upon the Presbyterians:) And for you, added he, to publish a Book, just at that Juncture of Time, to discourage the Magistrates and other Officers from putting in Execution those Laws which were made to suppress their Meetings, looks, I must tell you, but with a scurvy Countenance upon you.

If, replied I, with somewhat a pleasanter Air, there was any mis-timing in the Case, it must have been on the Part of those Plotters, for timing the breaking forth of their Plot while my Book was a-printing; for I can bring very good Proof that my Book was in the Press, and well-nigh wrought off, before any Man talked or knew of a Plot, but those who were in it.

Here our Discourse ended, and I taking, for the Present, my Leave of him, went to my Horse, and changing my Companion rode to Justice Tichborn's, having with me William Ayrs, who was best acquainted with him, and who had casually brought this Trouble on me.

When he had introduced me to Tichborn, I gave him a like Account of the Occasion of my coming at that Time, as I had before given to the other Justice. And both he, and his Lady who was present, exprest much Concern for Guli Penn's Illnes.

I found this man to be of quite another Temper than Justice Fotherly; for this Man was smooth, soft and oily, whereas the other was rather rough, severe and sharp. Yet at the winding up, I found Fotherly my truest Friend.

Tichborn consented to return with Ellwood to Rickmansworth. He consulted with Fotherly, and then examined Ellwood again about his book and told him that

It was a troublesome and dangerous Time, and my Book might be construed to import Sedition . . . but because they were desirous to forward my Visit to Madam Penn, they told me they would admit me to Bail, and therefore if I would enter a Recognizance, with sufficient Sureties, for my Appearance at the next Assize, they would leave me at Liberty to go on my Journey.

With characteristic Quaker obstinacy, Ellwood told them I could not do it [because as an innocent man he would not have others bound for him nor enter into a recognizance

himself . . .] Here we stuck and struggled about this a pretty while. . . . [but at last a compromise was arranged. Ellwood promised] if the Lord permit me Life, Health and Liberty [to appear before them on his return from Sussex] when and where you shall appoint.

It is enough, said they, we will take your Word: and desiring me to give their hearty Respects and Service to Madam Penn, they dismiss me with their good Wishes for a good Journey.

The courtesy and kindness of these two Justices stand out, a bright spot in our Quaker annals, amid the more frequent encounters with bullying Justices who would not hear any defence of the arch-crime of Quakerism.

Ellwood was sensible

that in this they had dealt with me very favourably and kindly with me, therefore I could not but acknowledge to them the Sense I had thereof. Which done, I took leave of them, and mounting, returned Home with what Haste I could, to let my Wife know how I had sped. And having given her a summary Account of the Business, I took Horse again and went so far that Evening towards Worminghurst, that I got thither pretty early next Morning, and, to my great Satisfaction, found my Friend in a hopeful way towards a recovery. I staid some days with her; and then finding her Illness wear daily off, and some other Friends being come from London to visit her, I (mindful of my Engagement to the Justices, and unwilling by too long an Absence, to give them Occasion to suspect I was willing to avoid their Summons) leaving those other Friends to bear her Company longer, took my Leave of her and them, and set my Face homewards, carrying with me the welcome Account of my Friend's Recovery.

Being returned Home, I waited in daily Expectation of a Command from the Justices to appear before them; but none came; . . . At length the Assize came, but no Notice was given to me, that I should appear there; in fine they never troubled themselves or me any further about it.

Thus was a Cloud that looked black and threatned a great Storm, blown gently over by a providential Breath, which I could not but with a thankful Mind, acknowledge to the all-good, all-wise Disposer, in whose Hand, at whose Command, the Hearts of all Men, even the greatest, are, and who turns their Counsels, disappoints their Purposes, and defeats their Designs and Contrivances, as He pleases.

For if my dear Friend Guli Penn had not fallen sick, if I had not thereupon been sent for to her, I had not prevented the Time of my Appearance but had appeared on the Day appointed; And, as I afterwards understood, that was the Day appointed for the Appearance of a great many Persons, of the dissenting Party in that side of the County, who were to be taken up and secured, on the Account of the aforementioned Plot, which had been cast upon the Presbyterians. So that if I had then appeared, with and amongst them, I had in all likelihood, been sent to Jail with them for Company, and that under the Imputation of a Plotter; than which nothing was more contrary to my Profession and Inclination.

Thus all ended happily for Thomas. Or rather, did not end. For now, nearly three hundred years later, another blessing is seen to have come out of this seemingly untoward illness of Gulielma's. It provides an epilogue to the long story of the beautiful affection between her and Thomas Ellwood that posterity would otherwise have lacked. The friendship, begun in their infancy, enduring faithfully and scrupulously on both sides throughout their lives, gave them the comfort of these last peaceful days spent together after all their storms. It is pleasant also to think of the help his advice must have been to Gulielma "in her business matters," which doubtless needed much attention in these first years after her mother's death and with her husband far away.

The other friend who supported Gulielma in her loneliness was, as has been said, no other than Margaret Fox, in her northern home at Swarthmoor. Two precious letters written by Gulielma to her still survive; and as they are the only surviving documents written by her in the first person after her marriage they must be given almost in full. After reading so much that has been written about her, it gives a sense of completion to be able to listen to her own words at last. In every way they recall and emphasize the character others have delineated for us.

The first was written two years after William Penn's departure for America, and one year after Thomas Ellwood's visit to her and her own illness.

Worminghurst. 2nd 6th mo. 1684.

Dear Friend, M. F.

In a sense of that love and life by which we are united to God and made near to one another, I salute thee. And, dear Margaret, I cannot express the sense I have of thy love and regard to me and my dear husband; but it is often before me with very great returns of love and affection, and desires for thy prosperity and preservation among God's people. I should be exceedingly glad if it were my lot once more to see thy face, but at present I see little likelihood. Yet methinks, that if thou foundest a clereness, it would be happier if thou wert nearer to thy dear husband and children, but I leave it to the Lord's ordering and thy freedom.

This is a beautiful instance of Gulielma's tact and also of her courage in "speaking the truth in love" even to a woman so much older than herself. Many Friends were apt to criticize the very small amount of time George Fox and his wife spent together during the long years of their married life. Margaret Fox herself alludes to this in her Testimony to him after his death, and explains how she felt that her duty as mistress of Swarthmoor obliged her to make her home in the North.

Gulielma, herself suffering at this time from the trial of her own husband's long absence, does not attempt to argue the point. She merely states her own opinion in a tentative yet direct way: "methinks," and "if thou found a clereness" "it would be happier if thou wert nearer to thy dear husband and children," but "I leave it to the Lord's ordering *and thy freedom.*" There is no attempt to judge for her, just the gentle hint. Would that all suggestions as to someone else's duty were as happily and tactfully made. Notice also Gulielma's use of the word "clereness." This was a favourite word of Wiclif in his translation of the Bible. It seems to have been also a characteristic word with her, for it occurs again in the second letter.

This first epistle continues:

There have been great reports of my husband coming with J. Purvis, A. Parker's brother-in-law, but he has returned without him, and brought letters. [Though the pronouns are rather

confused, as not infrequently with the writer, the meaning is only too clear.]

My husband was then very well on the 8th of the 4th month, and had some thoughts of coming, but when he did not mention. This puts a stop at present to my going; but with the Lord I desire to leave it, and commit him and myself to His holy ordering.

I truly rejoice to hear that thou art so well, and thy daughters, and that Thomas Lower had a little time to see them. [Evidently Lower had been imprisoned again.] I perceive that they are bad about you ["they" of course refers to persecutors, but the writer is carefully impersonal lest her letter falls into wrong hands] and that thy sufferings are large; but the Lord can, and I believe will, make it up. In Him is thy great reward for thy manifold exercises. They begin to be troublesome in this country also. They have not yet been here, but threaten it, they say. I desire my very dear love to thy son and daughter Lower, and to thy son and daughter Abraham. We are all pretty well, I bless the Lord.

Thy truly loving and affectionate friend

Guli Penn

(Original in Thirnbeck MSS. printed in Webb.)

The second letter from Gulielma to Margaret Fox seems to have been written during this same absence of William Penn in America, but whether earlier or later than the foregoing is not evident. His wife still seems to have some thoughts of joining him in Pennsylvania, which looks rather as if it had been written before the one quoted above, in which she has given up this idea. It bears the date upon it "1690" but only as an endorsement, and this can hardly be correct. Penn was in England at that time. He did not revisit his colony until 1699 and by that time Gulielma was dead.

The chief interest of the letter lies in the dream that Gulielma relates. This is extraordinarily like some of the dreams and visions of her mother's, as told in her autobiography some years before. Evidently mother and daughter resembled each other in their psychical outlook.

Also, as in the previous letter, the persecutors of the Quakers are only referred to indirectly. Here they are merely called

“bad spirits.” No names or details are given. It is also noticeable that William is said to be in “daily expectation” of his wife’s joining him on the other side of the Atlantic, and so hopeful of her coming that he had even ceased writing to her in England, expecting that she was already on the way.

Dear and honourable friend, Margaret Fox.

With salutations of true, constant, faithful love is my heart filled to thee. I feel it in that which is beyond words—in the unity of the Truth.

It rises in my mind, as I am writing, something that I saw in my sleep long ago, about the beginning of the time of these bad spirits. I thought I saw thee and dear George and many Friends in a meeting, where the power of the Lord was greatly manifested; and methought there came in dark wicked spirits, and they strove exceedingly against the [Divine] life that was in the meeting. Their chief aim was at thee and George, but mostly at thee. They strove to hurt thee, but, methought, thou gottest so over them that they could not touch thee, but only tore some little part of thy clothes, and thou escaped unhurt. Then a sweet rejoicing and triumph spread throughout the meeting. That dream was long ago, and the Lord has so brought it to pass that thy life now reigns over them all. It was thee they began with, but the Lord has given and will give thee the victory, to the joy and comfort of thy people.

Dear Margaret, I received thy acceptable letter long since, but have delayed writing to thee, in the hope of giving thee a fuller account of my husband and of our going. But the winter and spring have been so severe that letters have been hindered; and now that many are come, none of them of late dates are for me, because my husband has been in daily expectation of seeing us there, and I am sorry for his disappointment. I should have been truly glad to have seen him before going, as thou sayest, but am contented, and desire not his coming merely to fetch us, as I know he has a great deal of business to attend to; and also know it is not for want of true love or the desire to see us that keeps him, but it is that he must mind first the duties of the place in which he now stands, and do that which is right, and in which he has peace. If the lord gives clearness and drawings to come, I would be glad, but see no likelihood at present.

We have been much hindered, and are still, by reason of the Friend who does our business here being under some trouble;

having many years ago been bound for a man who is lately dead, and whose creditors are now coming on him; so that I cannot depend on his remaining here, and know not where to get another that is fit to leave things to at present, which is a great strait to my mind; my husband writing every letter for us.

I am truly refreshed in the remembrance of thee, and thy lines are very dear to me. I desire thy prayers to the Lord on our behalf, that he may attend us with his sweet and heavenly presence in our undertaking, and then it will be well with us, whether staying or going.

Dear Margaret, in a sense of this, and in true love I bid thee farewell, and am thy affectionate friend in my measure of the blessed Truth.

GULI PENN

P.S.—My very dear love salutes thy daughter Lower, whose sufferings I have a sense of. My love also to thy daughter and son Abraham, and to Isabel if with you.

(From Sylvanus Thompson's collection of MSS. printed in Webb.)

It has to be remembered that Mary Lower, like Gulielma, was a delicate woman. Plans must have been difficult indeed in those pre-cabling days. If the exact date of this letter were known, and if it really were written earlier than the previous one, it would be possible to determine whether the rather mysterious "trouble about the friend who does our business here" may have been responsible for Gulielma's appeal to Thomas Ellwood to come and advise her, during her severe illness in 1683.

These two letters bring Gulielma and her perplexities vividly before the reader, especially to other wives who have had to carry on at home alone, with a beloved husband absent at the call of duty in another hemisphere, yet desirous to accept any untoward happenings cheerfully for his sake. As Gulielma says: "He must first mind the duties of the place in which he now stands, and do that which is right, in which he has peace."

Again her love of "clereness" as to plans is visible here as in the former letter, and also her recognition that such "clereness" is a gift from God. After nearly a whole lifetime of silence, so far as posterity is concerned, though evidently she could use a

fluent pen, these letters are an invaluable gift to all who study her character.

A glimpse of the home life at Worminghurst during the absence of its master remains in a letter written by a guest there to his host in America:

James Claypoole to Wm. Penn, London 12 mo. 1683.

. . . ye 20th inst my wife and I with G. F. and Bridget Ford came to thy house at Worminghurst where we were very kindly entertained by thy dear wife and stayed there till the 26th then came away, and that morning she and thy four children were in good health, we had a comfortable time of it with George, I believe I shall never forget it.¹

Evidently Fox was a welcome guest in many homes. He seems to have been an easy and adaptable visitor. Another Friend writes:

I never liked my house so well as when he was in it.

These visitors at their own home, and correspondence with Friends at a distance, must have helped and supported Gulielma during the long two years of her husband's absence.

¹ *Penna Magazine*, x (1886), p. 271. "Four children" is surprising. There were only three to have farewell letters in 1682. Possibly Gulielma gave birth to another short-lived babe soon after her husband's departure? That a "daughter of Penn" is said to have been buried at the Blue Idol near Thakeham rather supports this conjecture. (See *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, xxx, p. 237.)

Chapter Four

REUNION

“The best of Wives and Women”

GULIELMA perhaps little guessed that even while she was writing her letter of 6 August 1684 to Margaret Fox her husband was already on his way to her, drawing nearer every day. Not two months after that letter was written he had landed, not only in England but actually on the Sussex coast quite near to his home. No records remain to tell of the meeting. Perhaps none are needed. A fortnight later he wrote himself to Margaret Fox to announce his safe arrival and to thank her for all she had done for his wife during his long absence.

LONDON. 22nd, 8th mo. 1684.

Dear M. Fox,

Whom my heart loveth and honoureth in the Lord, remembering thee in the ancient love and path of life which is most glorious in mine eyes, yea, excellent above all visible things.

Dear Margaret, herein it is, I enjoy the fellowship of thy Spirit above time and distance, floods and many waters.

It is now a few days above three weeks since I arrived well in my native land. [*N.B.* John William Graham says he landed on 6 October. In the “Apology” mentioned below Penn himself gives that as the date.]

It was within seven miles of my own house that we landed. I found my dear wife and her children well, to the overcoming of my heart because of the mercies of the Lord to us.

I have not missed a meal’s meat or a night’s rest since I went out of the country, and wonderfully hath the Lord preserved me through many troubles in the settlements I have made, both as to the government and the soil. I find many wrong stories let in of me, even by some I love; but, blessed be the Lord, they

are the effects of envy, for things are sweetly well with Friends there, and many grow in wisdom. And in the outward things they increase finely. . . .

My dear wife relates thy great love to her in my absence, & so she also wrote me word, which affected my heart and soul. I return thee my tender acknowledgment. . . .

I have seen the King and the Duke. They and their nobles were very kind to me, and I hope the Lord will make way for me in their hearts in order to serve his suffering people as well as my own interest. . . .

With much affection thy faithful friend and brother in the Truth,

WILLIAM PENN

(Original in Thirnbeck MSS. printed in Webb.)

After this long separation and many perils surmounted it might have been hoped that William and Gulielma could settle down together for a few untroubled years together before their last earthly farewell. This respite was not granted. Another daughter, another Gulielma Maria, was born to them in 1685, the year after their reunion, but she too was a short-lived flower and was laid to rest beside their other infants at Jordans in 1689. In public life, also, Penn returned from the Atlantic to find seas of trouble awaiting him on every side: his own personal troubles about the disputed boundary of his transatlantic estates, and recurring anxiety about the settlers and those whom he had left in charge there on the other side of the ocean. On this side, also, the continual sufferings of Friends weighed heavily upon him. He spent much time at Court interceding for them and by so doing incurred fresh troubles for himself.

In a fragment of autobiography called "An Apology for Himself,"¹ William Penn writes:

I arrived from America the 6th of October, '84, at Wonder in Sussex, being within seven miles of my own house; whence after some days of refreshment, I went to wait upon the King and the duke, then both at New Market; who received me very graciously, as did the ministers very civilly. Yet I found things in general with another face than I left them; sour and stern,

¹ First published from a MS. in Philadelphia by the Historical Society there in 1836.

and resolved to hold the reins of power with a stiffer hand than heretofore, especially over those who were supposed to be state or church dissenters, conceiving that the opposition which made the government uneasy, came from that sort of people, and, therefore, they must either break or bow. This made it hard for me, a professed dissenter. . . . Finding myself narrowed in this manner, that one day I was received well at Court, as proprietor and governor of a province of the Crown, and the next taken up at a meeting . . . and the third smoakt [?] and informed of for meeting with men of the whig stamp . . . I cast about in mind what way I might be helpful to the public and as little hurtful to my concerns as I could, for I had then a cause depending about bounds of land in America with the Lord Baltimore that was of importance to me. (Janney, Chap. XVIII.)

Penn's essential protestantism comes out clearly in a letter written shortly after the death of Charles II, which is worth quoting, in part, for the vivid details it gives of that event.

William Penn to Thomas Lloyd, 16th 1st Mo. [March] 1685.

The king is dead: and the duke succeeds peaceably. He was well on first-day night,—being the first of February, (so-called;) about eight next morning, as he sat down to shave, his head twitched both ways, or sides, and he gave a shriek, and fell as dead, and so remained some hours; they opportunely blooded and cupped him, and plied his head with red-hot *frying-pans*. He returned, [revived] and continued till sixth day noon, but mostly in great tortures. He seemed very penitent, asking pardon of all, even the poorest subject he had wronged; prayed for pardon, and to be delivered out of the world—the duke appearing mighty humble and sorrowful. . . .

He was an able man for a divided and troubled kingdom. The present king was proclaimed about three o'clock that day. . . . Severities continue still, but some ease to us faintly promised. Be careful that no indecent speeches pass against the government, for the king, going with his queen publicly to mass at Whitehall, gives occasion. I was with him, and told him so; but, withal hoped we should come in for a share. He smiled, and said he desired not that peaceable people should be disturbed for their religion. . . . The late king, the Papists will have, died a Roman Catholic; for he refused (after his usual way of evading uneasy things, with unpreparedness first, and then weakness,) the Church of England's communion, Bishop Ken, of Wells, pressing him, that it would be to his comfort

and that of his people, to see he died of that religion he had made profession of when living; but it would not do. And once, all but the duke, Earl of Bath, and Lord Faversham, were turned out; and one Huddleston, a Romish priest, was seen about that time near the chamber. This is most of our news. The popish lords and gentry go to Whitehall to mass daily; and the tower, or royal chapel, is crammed by vying with the Protestant lords and gentry. The late king's children, even by the Duchess of Portsmouth, go thither.

Our king stands more upon his terms, than the other, with France; and though he has not his brother's abilities, he has great discipline and industry. (Janney, Chap. XIX.)

Compare Bishop Burnet's saying: "The King could see things if he would, and the Duke would see things if he could." (Quoted in Brailsford, p. 88.)

After the death of Charles II the accusation of seeking Court favour was more prevalent than ever owing to Penn's personal friendship with James II. He, many years earlier, had solemnly promised Admiral Penn that he would be "constant in friendship" to his son, whose guardianship he had accepted.

J. W. Graham says:

Penn was the good, often ineffectual, angel of James II. . . . Had James finally been guided by him instead of by Father Petre, his Jesuit Confessor, he might have died a king in London, and Britain would have been spared the wars of William against Louis XIV, and the National Debt. . . .

James Stuart and William Penn were both religious men, and both had reason to desire religious toleration, from opposite poles of faith. William Penn was, in certain matters, the most powerful man in England, during the first two years of the reign of James II. His power was, however, wholly due to his single-mindedness. . . . So, day by day he was at Court engaged in obtaining somebody's pardon, or some exile's return, or working in a more general way for the annulling of the Penal laws on religion.

Bonamy Dobrée in his *Life of Penn* cruelly says that to see James II and William Penn together at Court must have been "like watching the actions of a vicious mule and a complaisant beaver." But this comment can be forgiven for the sake of the sentence he quotes from Bunyan: "The ornament and beauty

of this lower world, next to God and His wonders, are the men that spangle and shine in godliness." Among these Penn surely must be counted.

After the flight of James II in 1688 the whole situation was changed. From being *persona gratissima* at Court, William Penn came under the gravest suspicion. He was arrested and examined no less than three times in the two following years and was under the government's hostility till 1694. In 1689 the Toleration Act was passed and for the most part the persecuted Quakers could breathe again.

As Neave Brayshaw says in his book *The Quakers* (pp. 164 and 175), it was

a grudging measure which did not remove the persecuting laws from the statute book but enacted that there should be no penalty for breaking them . . . many who would have endured further persecution, had it come their way, now that they were freed from it, lay back, as it were, gasping for breath and disinclined for further adventure.

Of these latter, Penn was certainly not one. Of his political activities more will be heard later. Meanwhile the tercentenary publication of *The Short Journal* and the *Itinerary Journal* of George Fox, together with the earlier *Haistwell Diary* already quoted, has brought additional information about William and Gulielma's contact with Fox during the years after the former's return from America. The *Itinerary Journal* consists of two small books, mentioned by Fox in his will as "my little Journall Books," to distinguish them from his *Great Journal* of previous years. They provide a day-to-day diary of his engagements, almost continuous, except for the year 1682, which is missing. From these entries occasional glimpses are given of the Penns when in his company. In 1685,

the 23rd of the 6th mo: being the 1st day of the week he was at the meeting at the Savoy where he declared & afterwards went to prayer & then spake a few words to the people & afterwards the meeting departed; it was very large & peaceable within the yard. It was said the officers Came afterwards to the yard but finding noe meeting there they passed away againe.

The next day . . . he and Edward Brooks went from thence to

Wm Beeches where after they had stayd a while they took Coach 3 miles to Richard Kertons near Hollons house beyond Kingington to see W. P. but he not being at home Ed: Brooks went away agn but G. F. stayd that night . . . & the next morning W. P. Called to see him there, being then goeing from home and invited him to goe to his house and stay till he Came againe & dine with him who did accordingly, and after dinner W. P. goeing from home agn he stayed till he Came back at the 8th hour at night & then W. P. sent his Coach with him to Rich: Kertons.

The next morning . . . he went from thence with W. P. & his wife in their Coach to their Lodgings at Chering Cross Miles: 3: & from thence he & Guly: Penn went to visit Widdow Birkit beyond the Water but She was not at home Soe having stayd a while they went from thence to her Sisters where they stayd and dined and afterwards Crossing the water agn he went to Ellises & from thence to M. F.'s where he stayed that night & friends came to see him.

The Savoy Palace, mentioned above, was built by Peter, Earl of Savoy, in 1245, and became later the Savoy Hospital until it was abolished in the reign of Queen Anne. Here a Friends meeting was held till 1669, when a fire destroyed the property. After this, Martha Fisher and other Friends "built a meetinghouse and also some dwellinghouses in which resided several Friends, forming a little colony of Friends similar to that on both sides of Lombard Street. The meetinghouse was at the rear of the other houses, and there was 'a passage four feet wide, leading to a stone staircase which terminated in a yard paved with stone.'"¹

The 15th of the 5th mo: [1688] and the 1st Day of the week he [George Fox] went agn with W:p: and his wife who were come to WMs [William Meade's] the night before, in their Coatch to the Meeting; at Gooseys where after John Rouse . . . & another Friend and WP. had declared he stood up & declared a pritty time opening many things to the people concerning preaching the Gospell . . . to the Refreshment of many there, and after he had done he Concluded the Meeting with prayer. It was a very Large Meeting there being a great Many friends from London & a great great Many of the worlds people from the Adjacent places & after a while he took Coatch to WMs

¹ Note by Norman Penney on "Itinerary Journal," *Short Jnl.*, p. 297.

agn where WP & his wife & Son & a great many more friends Dined & after went away that Night.

The following year, 1689, there is a similar entry about a meeting "at Gracious Street" where on the 3rd of the 2nd mo.

after S. Crisp and W. Penn had Declared he stood up and Declared a pritty time . . . & when he had done the Meeting Departed which was very Large thence he went to Henry Goldney's againe, being weary and very weak, and W. P. & his Wife and severall other ffriends Came to visit him there thence he took Coach to B[enjamin] A[ntrobus] where he stayd that night & the next.

The following day "in the afternoon he went to the Meeting for Sufferings and afters to W. Ms where he stayd that Night."

This final entry is the last in this *Itinerary Journal* to mention Gulielma, as in her husband's company, when there was any intercourse between Penn and Fox. But these accounts, although few and short, convey a happy impression of natural, sociable living alongside of each other, no hint of rivalry or jar. "I loved to be in his company," Penn wrote after Fox's death. How pleasant too to think of Gulielma, in spite of her delicacy, able to accompany her husband to these meetings "in their Coatch" and to spend the night as guests at a friend's house. That unknown, and to us difficult to imagine, world of the late seventeenth century seems suddenly to reveal something more like modern conditions and week-end visiting than those of 250 years ago. Yet although these entries show that Gulielma was at this period occasionally able to accompany her husband on some memorable occasions, there were doubtless many other times when, as we know from his own words, he was obliged to leave her behind when he went away to "declare" at some meeting, and in other ways minister to Friends; but also, by so doing, to lay himself open to the continual risk of further imprisonment and further separation from his wife, children and dearly loved home.

On 13 January 1690/1 George Fox died.¹ Within an hour after his death Penn was writing to break the news to Margaret

¹ See "Fully Clear" in my *Romance of the Inward Light*.

Fox, who had been so good a friend to his own wife during his absence in America.

LOND. 13th 11th mo. 90.

Dear M. Fox,

With the dear remembrance of my unfeigned love in Christ call it in some sense, which is this that thy dear husband and my beloved and dear friend G. Fox, has finished his glorious testimony this night about half an hour after nine, being sensible to the last breath. O he is gone and has left us in a storm that is over our heads, surely in great mercy to him, but as an evidence to us of sorrow to come. . . . My soul is deeply affected with this hasty great loss, surely it portends to us great evils to come. A prince indeed is fallen in Israel today.

I cannot enlarge, for I shall write several to-night, & it is late. The Lord be with thee and thine, and us all, Amen. I am thy faithful and affect. friend

Wm. Penn.

. . . He died as he lived, a lamb, minding the things of God and his church to the last in an universal Spirit.

Writing of the same event to Friends overseas Penn says:

So full of assurance was he that he triumphed over death; and so, even to the last, as if death were hardly worth notice or a mention.

Another Friend adds:

Thus triumphing over death he departed hence in peace and slept sweetly on the 13th of the month anciently called January (for being as a door or entrance into the new year), about ten o'clock at night, on the 67th year of his age. (Sewel.)

At Fox's funeral a few days later, when it was recorded "The ancient Friends mourn like little children," Penn himself narrowly escaped arrest. For a long time afterwards he lived in a retirement that was almost like being in hiding. In 1695 he wrote "I have been above three years hunted up and down, & could never be allowed to live quietly in City or Country."

All these happenings have been recorded in detail in many lives of Penn. Their importance here is in the effect the continual anxiety and nervous strain must have had on Gulielma, already weakened by repeated illnesses.

Yet it is to this latest period of her life that one curious story must relate, if it has any foundation at all. This now seems more than doubtful, but it is too picturesque a legend to be wholly omitted here. Some day it may be discovered how it arose and whether a similarity of names, or of dates, originally caused confusion and gave rise to the story.

Agnes Strickland, in her *Life of Mary Beatrice* (of Modena), says:

Every year, Mrs. Penn, the wife of James's former protégé, the founder of Pennsylvania, paid a visit to the Court of St. Germain, carrying with her a collection of all the little presents which the numerous friends and well-wishers of James II and his queen could muster. Mrs. Penn was always affectionately received by the King and Queen, although she maintained the undeniable fact that *the Revolution was indispensable*, and what she did was from the inviolable affection and gratitude she personally felt towards their Majesties.

A footnote states that one authority for these facts is a *Life of William Penn* by Kinnersley, of which nothing else is known, and the other, *Carstairs State Papers*, refers to a Jacobite spy, and does not mention Mrs. Penn at all.

In itself the story is so inherently unlikely as to be almost impossible. "Always" and "every year" could hardly mean less than three years. Yet the "Glorious Revolution" took place in 1688 and the Palace of St. Germain was only given to James II in that year. William Penn's wife herself died in 1693/4. How unlikely that she ever faced the arduous journey by land and sea to St. Germain not once only but three times, considering her delicate state of health at this period. Also how strange that she was allowed to go alone, and that her husband, then also in England, did not accompany her. "A picturesque but most improbable legend" it has been truly called.

Chapter Five

DEPARTURE

“I shall see thee again”

THE son mentioned in the preceding chapter, as accompanying his parents to the hospitable home of the Meades at Gooseeyes, was doubtless their eldest surviving son, Springett Penn. “A lad of noble parts and of a spiritual nature like his parents.” This was the child born to them after the death of their first three little ones. He was allowed to grow up to be the light of his parents’ eyes, but alas! he too inherited a weak constitution and the seeds of tubercular disease.

Gulielma, happily for her, was the first to go. It was the crowning sorrow of Penn’s life when, shortly after his wife’s death, this gifted youth followed her. Bereaved as a husband and as a father, he immortalized their memories together in his

Account of the Blessed End of Gulielma Maria Penn, and of Springet Penn, the Beloved Wife and Eldest Son of William Penn. (Folio Penn, vol. i.)

This must now be printed almost in full. No other touch should blur what the hand of love has written. Also, her husband has preserved many of Gulielma’s own words, so that, after her silence of almost a lifetime, on her death-bed at last her voice can be heard speaking in the first person.

My dear Wife [Penn writes] after Eight Months illness (though she never perfectly recovered her Weakness of the Year before which held her about Six Months) departed this Life the 23rd of the 12th Month 1693/4 [February 1694] about half an Hour past Two in the Afternoon, being the Sixth Day of the Week and the Fiftieth Year of her Age, and was sensible to the very last.

This mention of her age at death shows that her birth must have been not later than 23 February 1643/4. Speaking of her "Six Months illness," a letter from Penn, written in December 1693, from Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire, mentions that

My poor Wife is yet weakly, but I am not without hope of her recovery, who is of the best of Wives and Women.

His final account continues:

During her Illness she uttered many Living and Weighty Expressions, upon diverse Occasions, both before and near her End. Some of which I took down for mine and her Dear Children's Consolation.

At one of the many Meetings held in her Chamber, we and our Children and one of our Servants being only present, in a tendering & living Power she broke out as she sate in her Chair, "Let us all prepare, not knowing what Hour or Watch the Lord cometh. O I am full of Matter! Shall we receive Good, and shall we not receive Evil Things at the Hands of the Lord? I have cast my Care upon the Lord, he is the Physician of Value my Expectation is wholly from Him: He can raise up, and He can cast down." A while after she said "oh what shall be done to the Unprofitable Servants?" At another meeting, before which much Heaviness seemed to lie upon her natural Spirits; she said "This has been a Precious Opportunity to me, I am finely Relieved & Comforted, Blessed be the Lord." At another Time, as I was speaking to her of the Lord's Love and Witness of His Spirit that was with her, to give her the Peace of Well-Doing, she returned to me, looking up, "For," said she, I never did, to my Knowledge, a wicked Thing in all my Life."

To a Friend aged 75 years that came to see her, she said "Thou and I to all Appearance are near our Ends"; and to another about 65 Years old, that came also to see her, she said "How much older has the Lord made me by this Weakness, than thou art? But I am contented, I do not murmur; I submit to His Holy Will."

In the Strength of her Fits and Vapours, she said: "Tis the great Goodness of the Lord, that I should be able to lie thus still. He is the Physician of Value to me. . . . Oh I am ready to be transported beyond my Strength. God was not in the Thunder, nor in the Lightning, but he was heard in the still, small Voice." She did at several Times pray very sweetly, & in all the Weakness manifested the most equal, undaunted and

resigned Spirit, as well as in all other Respects. She was an excelling Person, both as Child, Wife, Mother, Mistress, Friend and Neighbour.

She called the Children one Day when Weak, & said "Be not frightened Children, I do not call you to take my Leave of you, but to see you, & I would have you walk in the Fear of the Lord, & with His People in His Holy Truth" or to that effect.

Speaking at another Time solemnly to the Children, she said "I never desired any great Things for you, but that you may fear the Lord, & walk in His TRUTH, among His People to the End of your Days, &c."

She would not suffer me to neglect any Publick Meeting, after I had my Liberty, upon her Account, saying often "O go my Dearest! Don't hinder any Good for me. I desire thee go; I have cast my Care upon the Lord: I shall see thee again."

About Three Hours before her End, a Relation taking Leave of her, she said again, "I have cast my Care upon the Lord: My dear Love to all Friends" and (lifting up her dying Hands and Eyes) prayd the Lord to preserve them & bless them. About an Hour after, causing all to withdraw, we were half an Hour together, in which we took our last Leave, saying all that was fit upon that solemn Occasion.

She continued Sensible, & did eat something about an Hour before her Departure: at which Time our Children, and most of the Family were present. She quietly expired in my Arms, her Head upon my Bosom, with a sensible and devout Resignation of her Soul to Almighty God. I hope I may say she was a Publick as well as a Private Loss: For she was not only an excellent Wife and Mother, but an entire and constant Friend, of a more than common Capacity, & greater Modesty and Humility; yet most equal and undaunted in Danger. Righteous as well as Ingenuous, without Affectation. An easie Mistress, and good Neighbour, especially to the Poor. Neither lavish nor penurious, but an Example of Industry, as well as of other Virtues: Therefore our great loss, though her own Eternal Gain.

Again, four days later:

In great peace and sweetness she departed . . . being one of ten thousand, wise, chaste, humble, plain, modest, industrious, constant and undaunted. (H.S.P., iv, I, p. 200.)

The year of his wife's death is notable also as having seen

the publication of two of Penn's three most important works. Dr. Hull says:

The volume of Penn's authorship is enormous. Forty-four years' devotion to the use of his pen—although it shared the constant use of his tongue—produced approximately one and a half million written and printed words . . . an average of nearly four treatises every year. . . . Of the 157 writings of Penn issued from the press there are three which are genuine contributions to literature, namely *No Cross, No Crown*; *Fruits of Solitude* and *An Essay towards . . . the Peace of Europe*.

Both these last, as has been said, dated from 1693. Possibly his "dwelling deep" during the time of Gulielma's illness and death bore fruit in this way, and enabled him to produce writings of lasting value, as his earlier imprisonment in the Tower had produced *No Cross, No Crown*.

Fruits of Solitude is well known, together with Robert Louis Stevenson's eulogy upon it.¹ The *Essay towards the Peace of Europe* has been comparatively overlooked, though Penn himself presented a copy of it to Queen Anne. An American biographer, George Bancroft, states:

Penn preserved his serenity [during his internment], and true to his principles, in a season of passionate and almost universal war, published a plea for universal peace among the nations.

[The two Conferences at the Hague (1899 and 1907) and the Peace Conference at Paris (1919) were all attempts to carry out something of his plan.] Recent biographers of Penn and even realistic statesmen have become correspondingly mindful and respectful of Penn's "Plan" . . . which deserves careful study, especially at the present time. He believed entirely that "man's extremity is God's opportunity," declaring "The voice of Heaven and judgment of God are against war and for peace" and "Europe, by her incomparable miseries make it [his statesmanlike plan for the federation of Europe] now necessary to be done." (Hull, p. 161.)

But while his thoughts were dwelling on the succour of humanity at large his own best beloved were slowly being taken from him.

¹ Edmund W. Gosse says: "The philosophy of Stevenson as revealed to us from 1879 onwards is tintured through and through with the honest, shrewd and genial maxims of Penn. . . . So the little Quakerish volume has a double claim upon us." (Hull, p. 160.)

His and Gulielma's elder son, Springett Penn, the favourite grandson of Mary Penington, for whom, in 1680, she wrote the life of her first husband, Sir William Springett, largely quoted in the earlier portions of this book, was slowly dying of consumption. He died in April 1696, aged twenty-one, two years after his mother, drawing his last breath, as she had done, on the breast of William Penn. They were at Lewes, where they had spent the last sad month together. Springett was quite resigned to his approaching departure. His wish had been granted that he might live to see his father's second marriage to Hannah Callowhill of Bristol. This, though not a romantic union like William and Gulielma's, and though it was not wholly approved of at the time by Friends in general, certainly added much to the comfort and happiness of William's later life. It may be said to have borne out the dictum that "a second marriage should not be merely a second chapter after the first marriage, but a different story altogether."

Different this one was indeed, but it does not concern us here; except that of Springett's death-bed William writes:

Seeing my present Wife ready to be helpful, and do any Thing for him, he turned to her and said, "Don't thee do so, let them, don't trouble thyself so much," and again "Pray for me, Dear Mother, Thou art Good and Innocent." . . . Fixing his eyes upon his sister [Letitia] he took her by the Hand, saying: "Poor Tishe. Look to Good Things, poor Child. One drop of the Love of God is worth more than all the World. I know it. I have tasted it. I have felt as much or more of the Love of God in this Weakness than in all my Life before. . . ."

He desired to go Home [to Worminghurst from Lewes] if not to live, to die there, and we made preparations for it, being Twenty Miles from my House, and so much stronger was His Spirit than his Body, that he spoke of going next Day, which was the morning he departed; and a Symptom it was of his greater Journey to his longer Home. That morning he left us, growing more and more sensible of his extreme Weakness, he asked me, as doubtful of himself "How shall I go Home?" I told him, in a Coach. He answered "I am best in a Coach." But observing his Decay, I said Why Child, thou art at Home everywhere. "Ay" said he "So I am, in the Lord." . . . Being asked if he would have his Ass's Milk, or eat any Thing, he

answered "No more outward Food, but Heavenly Food is provided for me."

His Time drawing on apace, he said to me, My dear Father, Kiss me, thou art a dear Father, I desire to prize it; How can I make thee amends?

He also called his Sister and said to her, Poor Child, come and kiss me, between whom seemed a Tender and long farewell. I sent for his Brother that he might kiss him too, which he did; All were in Tears about him, turning his Head to me, he said softly, Dear Father, Hast no Hope for me? I answered, My Dear Child, I am afraid to hope, and I dare not despair; but am and have been resigned, though one of the hardest Lessons I ever learned. He paused awhile, and with a composed Frame of Mind, he said, Come Life, Come Death, I am resigned: O the Love of God overcomes my Soul.

Feeling himself decline apace . . . somebody fetcht the Doctor, but so soon as he came in, he said, Let my Father speak to the Doctor, & I'll go to sleep;

Which he did, and waked no more; breathing his Last on my Breast, the 10th Day of the 2d Month, between the hours of Nine and Ten in the Morning, 1696, in his One and Twentieth Year.

So ended the Life of my Dear Child and eldest Son, much of my Comfort & Hope, and one of the most Tender and Dutiful, as well as ingenuous & Virtuous Youths, I knew, If I may say so, of my own Dear Child; in whom I lost all that a Father can lose in a Child . . . my Friend and Companion as well as most affectionate and Dutiful Child.

Other things fade; grief such as this is ageless. The sorrow is made all the more poignant by remembering the distress that Penn's other children caused him in after years, especially his younger son by Gulielma; their daughter Letitia's husband; and his children by his second wife.

Mercifully those trials were all hidden in the far future.

For the readers of this book, the death of this promising young man recalls irresistibly that other death-bed of his grandfather, Sir William Springett, half a century before. Recalls, but with how great a difference! Instead of Arundel Castle with the noise of war all round, and the poor young wife having to be almost forcibly torn away from her dying husband, this record tells of the peaceful falling asleep of their grandson

on his father's breast, in the same county of Sussex, only twenty-five miles away.

Yet in his tragic losses Penn had discovered some pearls that posterity will not let die. Here are two of them:

Love is above all: and when it prevails in us all, we shall all be Lovely, and in Love with God and one with another.

Death is but Crossing the World, as Friends do the Seas;
They live in one another still.

Or, in the words of Francis Thompson, which might almost have come from Gulielma's lips:

Tell him—Love with speech at strife,
For last utterance saith:
I, who loved with all my life,
Love with all my death.

Thus, at last, the long story ends.

Four generations in turn have passed, have revealed themselves, and disappeared: Mary and Isaac Penington and their parents, Thomas Ellwood and his; the Admiral and Lady Penn; William and Gulielma themselves, and finally their children, have been watched and known. Something more can now be discerned of "the whole sweep of the line," as, in this one seventeenth-century group, the curve slowly rounds itself, from ancestors to descendants. Yet the beholder waits unsatisfied—longing to behold the future after all are gone.

"The years teach much that the days never knew." Beyond that even, the centuries teach much that the years never knew.

The histories of these lives have all been recalled while the greatest war in history has been raging. Begun in the terrible summer of 1941, these last words were written in 1945. When it is impossible to travel in space, it is a comfort to travel in time. The seventeenth century has often provided a refuge from the agonies of the twentieth.

A refuge, but an ironical question also. What has come of all these bygone hopes and fears? Have the lessons of toleration been really learned? In some countries, let us hope, in a measure, but in alas! how few. What about Penn's plans for

his "peaceful state" of Pennsylvania? and the wars it has seen since then? What about his far-seeing design for "The Peace of Europe"? Europe, never so troubled as now. Has the world really been slipping back, during the three centuries and more since he first dreamed that dream? Has it taken a wrong turning? Is it too late to hope?

Surely not. Life may seem to slip backwards, to return to its starting-point; even, it may be, to take a downward trend, but the faith remains that, in spite of all seeming, history is in reality neither a descent nor a closed circle but a spiral. Eventually it must and will ascend.

All these lives, faithfully lived so long ago, almost forgotten now, have their place in the long, slow climb of humanity to reach the goal, "Eternal in the Heavens."

Lord of the Ages. Thine
Is the far-traced design
That blends earth's mighty Past with her To-be.
Slowly the web unrolls,
And only wisest souls
Some curves of Thine enwoven cipher see;
Power fades and glory wanes
But the Unseen remains.
Thither draw Thou our hearts and let them rest in Thee.

(*Thomas Hodgkin*)

APPENDIX I

(See p. 17)

Lady Springett's Narrative with the Omitted Portions of Account of Sir William Springett's Death-bed.

After which, he being so young and strong, & his blood so hot (being but about twenty-three years of age), the fever was so violent, that they were obliged to sit round his bed to keep him in it; or else they must have tied him. All this time he used no unguarded expressions though delirious; but spoke seriously, about his dying, to the doctor I brought down with me; and ordered him what medicines to give him, saying "what you do, do quickly: if that does not do, nothing will help me." He spoke very affectionately to me, and wittily to his officers, about keeping their prisoner, making up the breaches, and keeping the watch; alluding to himself about getting out of bed, which he often attempted to do, putting out his legs, arms etc. His breath was so very hot and scorching that it made his lips chap. He perceiving my lips were cool would hardly permit me to take them off to breathe, but would often cry out, "Oh! don't go from me."

The doctor, my own maid-servants, & his attendants, were greatly troubled at my being so much with him; thinking that thereby I endangered both my own and child's life by constantly drawing in his infected breath. Sometimes I leaned over him for two hours at a time, to cool his mouth, which was an exceedingly painful posture to me, being so big with child. The medicine which he ordered being administered, he observed the

¹ *Experiences in the Life of Mary Penington* (written by herself). Edited, with introduction and notes, by Norman Penney, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. Published by Headley Bros., London, and The Biddle Press, Philadelphia, in 1911.

The above is the volume from which the extracts contained in this book are taken. At the end of it is a list of the various copies of the *Experiences* in manuscript and also of the printed versions of them. In one of these copies H. J. Cadbury finds the following explanation of Mary's reference to her measles (*Experiences*, p. 108): After "the battle was over" (Bk. I, p. 13) read "There being time for no more, which message of his in all probability saved my life, I being with child of thy mother and was sick of the measles, which could not come out because of the exercise of my mind, by reason of my having heard of the battle. This message," etc.

manner of its operation to be a signification of death, and called out to the doctor in these words: "This will not do: I am a dead man." The doctor had drawn the same conclusion, from the same sign, though he said nothing about it. My dear husband called on me again to lay my mouth upon his, which I did for a very considerable time. He grew still and fell asleep, which they that were about him observing, begged me to consider my condition; and entreated me to go to bed, and leave him with one of my maids, who might bring me an account about him when he awoke. I was at length prevailed on to go to bed. When he awoke, he seemed much refreshed, & sensible; for he took great notice of my maid, saying, "You are my wife's own maid; (for it was she that waited on me in my chamber). Where, where is my wife? How does my boy do?" And many particulars he inquired of her concerning me. At last he said "Go to my wife, & tell her I am almost ready to embrace her & talk to her, I am so refreshed with my sleep." She came up and gave me this account: upon which I was willing to go down to him. But she persuaded me not to go, saying, he would go to sleep again if I were not there to hinder him. So I sent her down with a message to him, and lay till late, thinking from the description she had given me of him, that there was a possibility of his recovery; but when I went down, I perceived a great alteration in him, and sadness upon all faces about him, which exceedingly shocked me, I having let in the flattering hope of his recovery. He spoke very affectionately to me, and dropped several serious weighty expressions. At last he called to me, saying, "Come, my dear, let me kiss thee before I die;" which he did with such eagerness as if he would have left his breath with me; and after said; "Come, my dear, once more let me kiss thee, and take my leave of thee." which he did in the same manner as before; then cried out, "Now no more, never no more" which having said, he fell into a great agony. He had been ill but seven days: his strength, to appearance, no ways impaired; but his spirits heightened, and blood inflamed by the violence of the fever: and being so young, he snapped his legs and arms with such force, that the veins seemed to sound like the snapping of cat-gut strings, tightened upon an instrument of music.

Oh! this was a dreadful sight & sound to me; my very heart-strings seemed ready to break, and let my heart fall from its wonted place; while the bed shook under him as if it would have fallen to pieces. The doctor, my husband's chaplain, & the chief officers that were about him, observing the violent condition

he was in, consulted together whether any thing could be done for him. Recollecting that he fell into this violent agitation on taking leave of me, they concluded that they must either persuade me, or take me from the bed by force; saying they believed his great affection for me, and the seeing me there were the occasion for it. Upon which they came to me, and desired me to go from the bedside to the fire saying

(*Continued on p. 17 of this volume*)

APPENDIX I_A

(See p. 24)

A LONG silk scarf preserved in America, “still bearing traces of its azure blue colour,” is said to have been made for William Penn by his wife on his departure for Pennsylvania. See the illustration and description of it in the Tercentenary Memorial Volume, *Remember William Penn*. (Pennsylvania, 1945.) This bears witness to Gulielma’s skill at handicrafts.

A cabinet of black wood, with delicate inlays of mother-of-pearl decorated with classical scenes, is also preserved at Jordans in Buckinghamshire, with an authentic descent showing that it was once Gulielma’s property. This, like the silver clasps on her books, mentioned in Appendix VII, evinces her love of beauty in her personal possessions.

APPENDIX II

(See p. 99)

ONE of the results of this business journey by Gulielma and Thomas Ellwood in 1669 is a small leaf of paper, about 8 by 6 inches, in the Penn MSS., now in the Reference Library at Friends House, London, N.W. It runs as follows:

GULIELMA SPRINGETT AND HER TENANT

Upon the 22nd day of the month called July, 1669, Accounts were stated between John Fuller and his Landlady, and it appeared that at the time called Michaelmas, then next ensuing, there would be due from him to his Landlady for rent, one hundred and eighty pounds.

It was then also agreed between them, That John Fuller should hold the farm (without the woods) for one year more at four-score pounds; and in case it should prove a good year John shall advance his Rent five pounds, but if it should prove an ill year, his Landlady shal abate five pounds; and that it shal be referred to two men to determine whether it be a good or a bad year.

Agreed further that if an house be built on the farm next Summer, John shal lay in at his own charge ten thousand Bricks, and if it be thatched he is to find straw.

GULIELMA MARIA SPRINGETT.

[*N.B.* The signature of the Landlady (then in her twenty-sixth year) is in somewhat large, carefully written characters.]

APPENDIX III

(See p. 147)

Important Letters relating to William Penn and Gulielma Springett, and by them, discovered in P.R.O. in London and at Philadelphia by H. J. Cadbury; with his notes about them. He gives permission for them to be printed here, with his explanatory notes. They are as follows:

- (a) A letter from William Penn's servant beginning "dear G. S." with an important message from him, written from the "Towr Prison 10^m 68" in Penn's own hand.
- (b) A letter to W. P. in Ireland, dated "Pen 16 5mo 1670" signed "thy friend in the lasting friendship Guli: Springett" addressed to "Capt. John Gay att his house in Dublin For Will: Pen these."
Postscript to the preceding, signed "M. P." (Mary Penington).
- (c) Undated letter beginning "To Dr G. S." and signed "W. P." Since this letter announces Thomas Loe's death "yesterday" it was probably written before Penn's letter to Isaac Penington dated "17th 8th.mo 1668" on the same subject. Published in *Penns and Peningtons* and elsewhere.
- (d) A set of verses called "An Holy Triumph" "Writt in Newgate 1671" and inscribed "sent to Dr G. M. Springett, my Dr wife since."

N.B.—(a), (c) and (d) are from the "William Penn Letter Book," Historical Society of Pennsylvania, pp. 43–5.

THE "WILLIAM PENN LETTER BOOK"

This is a MS. volume of copies of sundry papers of William Penn now in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and formerly in the papers owned by Granville Penn. Penn himself had seen the volume and supplied a few endorsements . . . and the following heading:

"A Book of Letters and some other Papers given forth at several times as required of the Lord and otherwise in zeal

and a good understanding of them, whether to Friends, rulers, people or any particular persons, by me William Penn from the 7th month in the year 1667.”

The book has had various vicissitudes, pages 1-42 and 43-180 being once separately owned and sold. Evidently other pages once followed page 180. The volume is rebound under the title “William Penn’s Letter Book, 1667-1675.”

The above was a statement made by H. J. C. in *Bulletin* of Friends Historical Association, vol. xxxiii, 1944, p. 68. He says now:

“I may add two more observations: (1) the book was supplied with two indexes; (2) to judge from the documents included in the Life of the Author by Jos. Besse in the first edition of William Penn’s works this MS. was available and used. Besse says he used Penn’s own private memoirs. Several of the documents printed in Volume I are in MS. in this book.”

(a) From “William Penn Letter Book,” Historical Society of Pennsylvania, pp. 43-4:

Dr G. S

1668

I thought it convenient to send thee a copy of what my Masters Reply was to me, when I brought him word, how that the Bishop of London would have him recant in Comen garden, at an appointed time, before the Face of all the City, or else be a Prisoner during his Life.

Saith he, all is well, I wish they had told me so before, since the expecting of a release put a stop to some Business. Thou mayst tell my Father, who, I know, will ask thee, these words, that my Prison shall be my grave before I will budge a jot, for I ow my conscience to no mortall man. I have no need to fear, God will make amends for all, they are mistaken in me, I vallour not their threats nor refutations for they shall know, I can weary out their Malice & Peevishness, & in me shall they all behold a resolution above fears, conscience above cruelty, and a baffle put on all their designs by the Spirit of Patience, the companion of all the tribulated Flock of the blessed Jesus, who is the Author & Finisher of the Faith that overcomes the World, yea Death & Hell too. Neither great nor good things weare ever arrived without Loss & Hardships. He that would reap & and not Labour, must faint with the wind and perish in disappointments; But a hair of my Head shall not fall, though they think to pull my Locks, without the providence of my Father that is over all. The day is at hand that it shall be found

just with God to recompense tribulation upon them that trouble the innocent, And to them rest eternal that's glorious indeed. It's like they will be severer with me then formerly & so I may want these opportunities of conveying Notes to thee, wherefore I caution thee to be watchful over thyself, that thy Mind become not darkned, nor thy Light extinguisht, for then thou knowest the Night to be farr spent & dawns thou hast seen, Waite for the Day-Starr to arise, & follow it & be a child of the Son, that he may be thy Everlasting Light & Glory, farewell

Thy Loving Master,
W. P.

(Dated in Wm. Penn's own hand)

Towr Prison 10^m—68

H. J. Cadbury's note on the next two letters is as follows:

“*The Calendar of the State Papers Relating to Ireland preserved in the Public Record Office* includes in the volume for September 1669–December 1670 (1910, but the last volume published in this series) a few letters addressed to William Penn the younger. These were evidently intercepted by the authorities. One of these (p. 195, given the date of 16 July 1670) was assigned to William Springett. I sent to P.R.O. for copies of these and found, as I suspected, that the writer was Guli Springett. The date in Quaker language was 7^{mo}, that is September. There was a postscript or enclosure from M. P., that is Mary Penington, which the *Calendar* does not even mention. I came upon these quite by accident. So far as I know they have not been used by biographers of William Penn. Now published in *B.M.H.B.*, lxx, 1946, October.”

GULIELMA MARIA SPRINGETT

(b)

Pen 16 5^{mo} 1670

W P

With the salutation of that love which is everlasting and which is livingly felt at this time in my hart to thee and al that truly love the Lord and have given up there all to follow him in this day of trial I salute thee with the rest of thy comp [?] and friends there, yours of the 27 of 4th mo we received which was very welcome to my Mother but your selves would have been much more acceptable, especially she being laitly deprived of the companie of my Deare father who went to vissit friends at Reading and the Goaler sent for Armorer who after a great

deale of discourse and reviling language tendered him the oath and committed him to the Goal

he hath since been had to the sessions and tendered it again so that in short time it is like to come to a praemunire unless God put a stop to theer wicked intentions we could rather if we might chuse that he had been in almost any other place but in al things we have learned to be content and desire to be given up wholly to his will without whom this nor any other trial could come on us and we know he orders al things to the good of those that put there trust in him

Friends heare abouts are generally well and meetings yet quiet which we can not but looke upon as a great thing, especially when we consider the greivous sufferings that friends meet with all in other places which are to teidous to mention in perticular. deare G F was heare att two of our meettings and they were very large. we were laitly att London and friends were very well. we speake with Will Baily who came the night before to Lond: from Barbadoes he saw J P there he was very well and the place agreed very well with him we expect him home very shortly if nothing prevent Jo: Stubs was also heare and desired his deare love to thee T E s deare love is to be thee P F and J P with mine dearly to them &c

Who am thy friend

in the lasting friendship

Elizabeth Walmsleys

dear love is to thee &c

as also S H s

Guli: Springett

Addressed to Captain John Gay att his hous in Dublin

For Will: Pen these

[It is strange to think that though we, so long after, can read these words, William Penn himself never did.—L. V. H.]

MARY PENINGTON

Postscript to preceding:

Deare W P

Thy letter in which thou kindly joynedest us I received with a deep sense of thy love, as also thy prospering in the truth my deare Husband and I are now separated as G S hath informed thee but I entend to send it him I am very wel satisfied that the stay of my boy is upon the account of thy servis as for thy care Counsel and love I believe he hath not wanted it it is a

great joy to me to heare of thy faithfulness and unweariedness in that worke of the Lord I being now deprived of my Husbands companie I am more honing after my poore boy then I have been since he went indeed this of my husbands imprisonment is hard very hard to me. but when I retire out of all affliction and wait to see what the Lord will do with him there I am still as if the thing were not

Thy intire friend

M P

my deare love is to P F and my poor child he hath increased his interest in my love by his subjection to thee

(c) From "William Penn Letter Book," Historical Society of Pennsylvania, p. 103:

To Dr G. S.

This salutes thee in that which is unfeigned: Time will not permit a long Epistle: Therefore in short know, that after a tedious sicknesse, but many signal manifestations of Gods glorious power & overcoming love (as time will bring to light, & publick view) Dr Tho. Loe yesterday about the 9th hour in the morning, left the Body, & is ascended far above all visible & created things to the full possession of the pure Eternal Rest & Sabbath of the holy God: Having unspeakeably finisht his Testimony, & fought, like a Valiant Souldier, ye good Fight: Whose works follow him & have Eternis'd his memorial amongst the Faithful. Whom my soul loved whilst alive: & bemoanes—now dead: & yet have pure fellowship with that which lives for ever. This day we lay the Body in ye Ground, as having done its makers work & will. And being it's thus: let us all presse after the Inheritance he hath obtained, through travils, tryals, perils, temptations, afflictions, cruel mockings, & what not: so shall it be well with us

Farewell

W. P.

(Cf. letter of Wm. Penn to Isaac Penington, London, 17th of 8 mo. 1668, written on the same subject, but later than this undated letter, and published in Webb, *Penns and Peningtons*, and elsewhere.)

(d) From "William Penn Letter Book," Historical Society of Pennsylvania, p. 70:

An Holy Tryumph

(added by W P)

sent to Dr G. M. Springett, my Dr
wife since

writt in Newgate, 1671

Your Goals & Prisons we defie
By bonds we'l keep our Libertie
Nor shall your racks, or toments make
Us, e're our Meetings to forsake.

Nor all your Cruelties afright
Our hearts, y^t own & love ye Light
No, death can never make us bend
Nor make our conscience condescend
For that Seed's risen, which will bow
And lay your lofty Mountains low
Your Hills shall fly away before
The Majesty that we adore

And Heaven will display it self
Before your Eyes to our Releif
And you that persecute shall know
A deadly Arrow from his Bow

And Vengeance, for a Recompense
He'll render you in our Defence
And overturn for evermore
False prophet, dragon & the Whore

APPENDIX IV

(See p. 138)

Penn's Wig

Two entries in this "Irish Journall" deal with the subject of William Penn's wig.

In the well-known youthful portrait of him in armour, painted during his visit to Ireland in 1666 at the age of twenty-two, he is shown with long wavy hair descending to his shoulders.

Sewel says that when he was taken prisoner at a Quaker Meeting, also in Ireland, three years later, in 1669, he was "finely cloathed as a young gentleman" and "wearing a great periwig" (the wavy hair in the early portrait could hardly be so described).

On this third visit, in 1669, an entry in his Journal on the 25th of 9th month states:

"I caused my hair to be cutt of and put into a wigg because of Baldness since my imprisonment. I was at Meeting and a very heavenly one it was."

Again on 25th 1st mo. (1670):

"Gave orders for my little wig to be made into two cap-borders."

Yet the ancient account of his conversion in 1666, already quoted, says that in England, shortly after his conversion and before his first meeting with Gulielma Springett:

"After some time Wm went to bear a friend company to . . . [name of place omitted in MS.] as they rod along the Rod Wm thought his two-tailed wigg which he had not yet left off, was burdensome to him took off his hatt turned his wigg off his head behind him not looking back to see what became of it he had some hair tho' but short when he came to [. . .] where Wm's Mouth was first open'd. . . ."

This almost looks as if the sacrifice of the wig and his first appearance in the Ministry were, if not cause and effect, still very closely connected in time.

Finally a letter in Penn's own handwriting,¹ but composed by George Fox and endorsed "G. F. to Henry Sidon" 25 3mo 1677, shows that some Friends in Warwickshire had apparently been scandalized by Penn's wearing what they called "a Periwigg." It also shows Fox's own eminently sensible treatment of the matter, explaining but in no wise countenancing ill-natured gossip.

Dr Friend

To whom is my love & all the rest of Friends in the Truth of god, and my desire is, that thou and all the rest may be preserved in gods peacable Truth and the love of it.

Now Concerning the thing thou speakst to me of, that Sarah Harris should say to the that Wm Mead and Wm Penn did ware Perrywiggs and call them Periwigg men; first concerning Wm Mead, he bid me putt my hand upon his head, and feel, and said he never weare Perriwig in his life, and wonder'd at it: and as for Wm Penn he did say that he did ware a little civil border because his hair was Come off his head, and since I have seen and speak with Wm Penn, his border is so thin, plain and short, that one cannot know it from his own hair. W. Penn when but 3 years ould so lost his hair by the small Pox that he wear them then, long and about 6 years before his Convincmt, he wear one, and after that he endeavourd to goe in his own hair, but when kept a close Prisoner in the Towr next the leade, nine monthe, and no barber suffer'd to come at him, his hair shed away; and since he has worn a short civil thing, and he has been in danger of his life after violent heats in meetings and rideing away after them, and he wares them to keep his head warm and not for pride; wch is manifest in that his perriwigs Cost him many Pounds apiece, formerly when of the world, and now his Border, but a five shillings; and he has lay'd of more for Truth than her and her Relations and I am sorry the should speak such things, and they did not do well to discourse of such things, I desire the may be wiser for the time to come.

And so with my love to thee and thy wife & father and N. Newton

G. ff.

And hees more willing to fling it off if a little hair come, then ever he was to putt it on.

(This is a most disarming and genuinely concerned epistle, is it not?)

¹ *J.F.H.S.*, vi, p. 187.

Apparently the order of what happened is:

- (a) loss of hair as a child of three;
- (b) the dropping of his wig on the road;
- (c) the wearing of a great periwig in Ireland;
- (d) loss of hair in the Tower;
- (e) (f) two references in Irish Journal, as above;
- (g) the "little civil 5s. border" in 1677.

But in later life he paid not 5s. but £3 10s. for a wig in January 1700/1 and £2 10s. in 1702! See H. J. Cadbury's note in *B.F.H.A.*, vol. xxxiv, 1945, p. 23.

APPENDIX IV

The Manuscript Book of Mary Penington Junior

THERE remains one intimate family matter concerning the Peningtons that demands a mention, as it links up Mary Penington and her Journal with these later events. It concerns her and Isaac's only daughter, another Mary Penington. She is the child whose weight is recorded with others, in Ellwood's autograph, in the script already referred to. Her glowing estimate of his teaching is also worth recalling. (See page 82.)

This second Mary Penington has an especial interest for me as I possess, among our family treasures at Bareppa, a small square MS. book written in her beautiful clear script. This does credit to Ellwood's teaching: "Our foremost scribe" as he has been called.

At the beginning is the inscription:

"Mary Penington her Book, being copies of several papers of friends which she transcribed for her Dear Father."

Though the fact is nowhere stated, very likely these may have been passages copied out by his daughter for Isaac to read during his repeated imprisonments, when cut off from his own books. There are many extracts from Fox's writings and those of other Friends, and a most interesting paper by Edward Burrough about the origins of Quakerism in London, signed

"By me that from the beginning hath travelled in the Worke of the Lord in this City. Edward Burrough."

The dated extracts continue until 1706: the remaining pages of the book are blank. A note in the handwriting of my great-grandfather, Luke Howard, F.R.S., to whom the book once belonged, calls attention to the watermark on the earlier portion. These pages bear the initials I. P. and a curious scrolled design by its side as a watermark. Can this be only a coincidence? Or were any of the Penington family connected with the manufacture of paper? Mary Penington's original seems to have been a small exercise book of which the faded paper covers still

remain. This has been bound in leather, and many additional blank pages added, by a Newcastle-on-Tyne bookbinder, presumably by the order of my father, Thomas Hodgkin. His name is stamped on the cover.

Though naturally not alluded to in this book, it seems that during the years covered by the *Itinerary Journal* this Mary Penington was having a troublesome love affair with a certain Samuel Boulton. For some reason the match was not approved of by Friends. There are several records in the *Itinerary Journal* of Monthly Meeting minutes, and also private conversations between Fox, Penington and Penn, about "S. B. and M. P.'s affair." These are too long to insert here. The proposed marriage seems to have been finally given up at a Monthly Meeting at the Ellwoods' home at Hunger Hill in 1695. The following year Mary married another man altogether: Daniel Wharley, a woollen-draper at George Yard "with a shop and house close to the Meeting-house and Chamber. George Fox often resorted thither and met William Penn and other Friends in both shop and house, at times remaining to the mid-day meal."

So Mary Penington, junior, seems also to have settled down into a happy married life after a troubled youth, though not without sorrows of her own as the MS. book before referred to shows. After the death of Isaac Penington in 1679 his daughter seems to have used the book for her own favourite extracts, including several compositions by Thomas Ellwood. He wrote his usual Elegy "On the Death of Mary Penington" (senior), of which perhaps one verse will be enough to quote:

Upon September's eighteenth Day
In Sixteen hundred eighty two
Death took a Vertuous Dame away
That of her equals left but few.
She widow was but now is gone
To Springet and to Penington.

Twenty-four years later he wrote another Elegy "On the Death of Little Nanny Wharley who drew her first Breath on the 22nd of 12th mo. 1697. Her last on the 3rd of 10th mo. 1706." "Little Nanny" must therefore have been the daughter and granddaughter of the two Mary Peningtons whom the faithful Thomas had loved and served. This last poem is only twelve lines long. It may therefore be printed in full, as he wrote it and as Nanny's mother copied it out:

Swinging his syth about, the common Mower
Among the grass lop'd off this lovely Flower.
Blame not the Mower, Eye the supream Hand
Which both the Syth and Mower doth command.
The Master held this precious Plant too good
To grow in common Soil or where it stood
So with a sudden snatch he in a trice
Did it transplant into his Paradise
Where she enjoys a never-fading Spring
Out of the Reach of every hurtful Thing
Let therefore none that lov'd her grieve that She
So early went to such Felicity.

5th 10th mo. 1706. T. E.

APPENDIX VI

HENRY J. CADBURY writes as follows:

An interesting sidelight on the home of William and Gulielma Penn is given by a certificate they gave to their former servant, Elizabeth Sims.

The original certificate is not extant in Philadelphia, but a copy made before the end of the century in a volume now at Swarthmore College, entitled "Friends Certificates 1684-1758," imitates the signature of William Penn. There is another copy in a volume of certificates at 304 Arch Street. The certificate was published in A. C. Myers's *Quaker Arrivals at Philadelphia*, 1902, p. 10, almost exactly. The text is as follows:

Dear ffriends, These are at ye Request of an old Servant of ours, Elisabeth Simms, to let you know that she hath served us nine years and a half, where first she Received the visitation of ye blessed Truth, since which time she hath in generall behaved her self honestly and diligently, not without a sense of ye Truth and an operation of ye Power of it, which we earnestly desire she may mind and that she may approve herself a Blameless walker amongst you She is clear of all Persons as to marriage that we can tell of, save one John Martin, and has been well Regarded of ffriends of ye Meetings to which she has belonged. The Lord blesse you and bless your Care for his Glory. Amen. Your Reall ffriends in ye Truth

Kensington ye 2^d 6^{mo} 1685
Sarah Hersent
Rose Miller

Wm Penn
Gulielma Maria Penn

APPENDIX VII

Gulielma's Library

WHILE this book was passing through the press, the librarian brought to my attention five volumes in the library at Friends House that war-time precautions had prevented being available before. These all belonged to Gulielma Springett before her marriage.

Four of them are collections of Quaker tracts bound in black morocco leather. Two of these have beautifully chased silver clasps and contain an inscription in the handwriting of Thomas Ellwood, "Ex Libris Gulielma Maria Springett." The two other volumes, which now carry more modern brass clasps, show that at one time they also had silver clasps of similar pattern to those mentioned above. Each of the four volumes contains a list of the works collected within, written in the hand of Thomas Ellwood.

The fifth volume, bound in calf, is a copy of *An Apology for the Principles and Practices of the People Called Quakers* by George Whitehead and William Penn. Much of this was written by William Penn during his imprisonment in Newgate in 1671. On the flyleaf is an inscription in Penn's own hand, "To my deare ffriend Gulielma Springett," and below, intertwined initials, "W.P." Another copy of the same work is inscribed by Penn "To My Deare ffriends Isaack & Mary Penington. W.P."

These treasured books give us a further intimate glimpse of the people concerned, of Gulielma's taste for good materials and fine workmanship; and of Thomas Ellwood's readiness to serve her in a very simple capacity. Knowing that he called Edward Burrough his "father in the Quaker faith" it seems distinctly possible that at least the volume consisting entirely of Burrough's writings may have been Ellwood's gift to Gulielma. William's dedication of his new book to his beloved, and of an exactly similar copy of the same work to her parents, indicates a very solid frame of mind joined to an almost boyish pride in his latest work, though he already had a dozen tracts to his name.

APPENDIX VIII

Memorial Tablet to Gulielma Penn in Pennsylvania

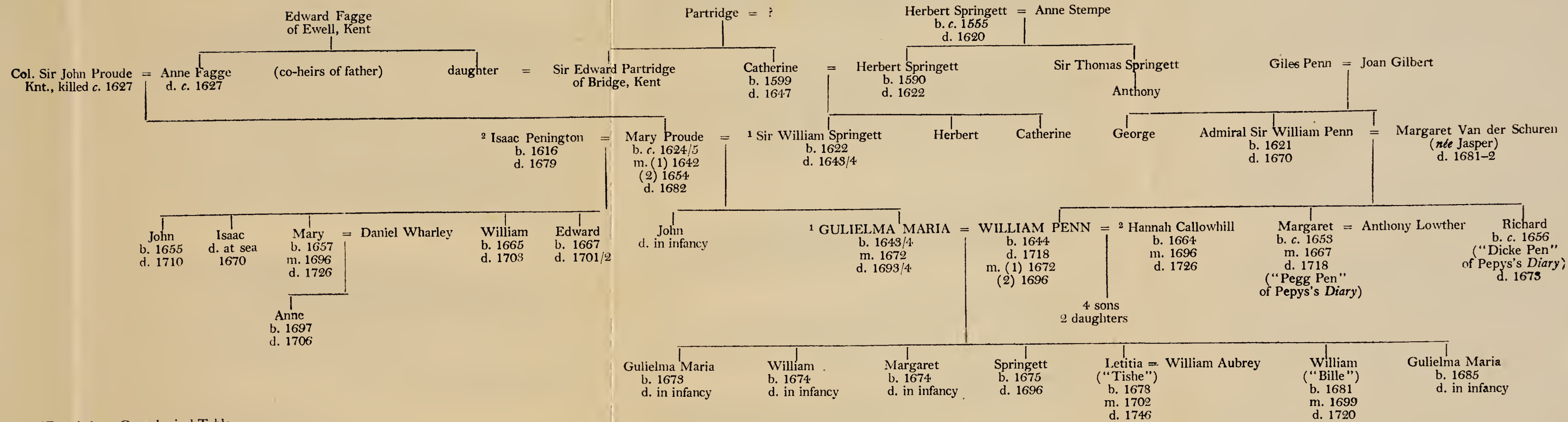
GULIELMA MARIA PENN
1644—1693

ABLE AND BELOVED FIRST WIFE
OF
WILLIAM PENN

POSTHUMOUS DAUGHTER AND GREAT HEIRESS
OF SIR WILLIAM SPRINGETT, KNIGHT
BY HIS WIFE MARY DAUGHTER OF
SIR JOHN PROUDE, KNIGHT
SKILLED IN PHYSIC AND SURGERY
SHE MINISTERED TO THE POOR
SUSTAINED HER HUSBAND IN THE
FOUNDING OF PENNSYLVANIA
CARED FOR THEIR LITTLE CHILDREN
AT THEIR HOME WORMINGHURST HOUSE
COUNTY SUSSEX ENGLAND
DURING HIS FIRST VISIT HERE
1682—1684

*Marked by the Pennsylvania Historical Commission
and the Associate Committee of Women
of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania
1932*

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(Founded on Genealogical Table
 in *Experiences*, compiled by
 NORMAN PENNEY, F.S.A.)

INDEX

- Allegiance, Oath of, 65
 All Hallows, Barking, Church, 109
 Amersham, Bury Farm, 136-7, 143-4
 Amyraut, Moïse, 117
 Anne, Queen, 198
 Antrobus, Benjamin, 192
 Armscott, 159
 Arundel, sieges of, 14
 Aubrey: *Brief Lives*, ref., 72n., 73n., 80, 85, 88, 111, 126, 137, 145
 Augustine, Works of, 69
 Aylesbury, Quaker imprisonments at, 35, 66, 67, 89, 90
 Ayrs, William (apothecary and barber), 174-6
- Bache, Humphrey, 63
 Baltimore, Lord, 188
 Bancroft, George, 198
 Barclay: *Letters of Early Friends*, ref., 35, 113
 Barclay, R., 162
 Barker, Sir Ernest, ref., 60
 Bastwick, John, 5
 Bath, Earl of, 189
 Batten, Sir W., 115
 Beech, William, 191
 Bennett, Ambrose, Justice, 88, 91-2
 Besse: *Sufferings*, 154
 Birkit, Widow, 191
 Blaikling, John, 161
 Blake, General, 111
 Biss, Thomas, 86
Boscobel Tracts, ref., 105-6
 Bradley, Richard, 81
 Brailsford: *The Making of William Penn*, ref., 18, 80, 110, 131, 189
 Braithwaite: *Second Period*, ref., 128; *Beginnings*, 38
 Brayshaw: *The Quakers*, ref., 163, 190
 Brewer: *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, ref., 64
 Bridewell, Quaker imprisonments in, 75, 76
 Briggs, Rob., 161
 Bridgwater, Earl of, 43
 Brooke, Baron. *See* Greville, Robert
 Brooks, Edward, 190
 Browne, Sir Richard, Alderman, 83
 Bunyan, John, ref., 189-90
- Burnet, Bishop, 189
 Burke, Edmund, 60
 Burnyeat, John, 161, 162
 Burrough, Edward, 57, 58, 68, 76, 113; death of, 83
 Burton, Henry, 5
 Bush: *Early Seventeenth Century Literature*, 25
 Bushel, juryman, 141, 142
- Cadbury, H. J., 137, 147, 155, 203, 207-9
 Callowhill, Hannah. *See* Penn
Cambridge Journal, ref., 37, 148, 150
 Camm, John, 127
 Carbury, Earl of. *See* Vaughan, Lord John
 Carlyle, Thomas, quoted, 111
Carstairs State Papers, ref., 194
 Carver, Richard, 105, 106
 Caton, William, 149
 Chalfont St. Peter, the Grange, 37, 39, 41, 54, 61, 68, 71, 80; Peningtons turned out of, 90
 Charles I, 62, 108
 Charles II, 26, 83, 105, 115, 127, 159, 187; death of, 188, 189
 Chaucer, Geoffrey, 110
 Cherry (a constable), 67
 Chigwell, Free Grammar School, 110
 Chorley Wood, King John's Farm, 152-3
 Civil War, 14, 19n., 50
 Clark (a constable), 67
 Clark, Squire, 65, 66
 Claypoole, James, 185
 Coale, Josiah, 123, 127
 Conventicle Act, 116, 120, 140
 Conway, Anne, Viscountess, 41
 Cornwall, 35, 94, 153
 Courtrop, Captain, 19, 20
 Cowley, Abraham, 110
 Crisp, Stephen, 192
 Crook, John, 37, 38
 Cromwell, Oliver, 62, 108
 Crowell, Oxfordshire, 50, 60, 72
 Crump: *History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood*, 64, 71
 Curtis, Anne, 68, 69-70, 93
 Curtis, Thomas, 35, 36, 57, 93, 113, 127

- Darrell, Major, Governor of Sheerness Castle, 155
- Davies: *History of Holland*, 2*n*.
- Desborough, General, 111
- Dictionary of National Biography*, ref., 9*n*., 30, 31, 37
- Dobrée: *Penn*, ref., 22, 189
- Donne, John, 154
- Dutch, war against, 119
- Earlham Hall, Norfolk, 153
- Edgehill, battle at, 10*n*., 12
- Education, Penn's ideas on, 168-9; Fox's ideas on, 81
- Ellis, Mary, courted by Thomas Ellwood, 96-8; married to him, 102-3; living at Hunger Hill, 148
- Ellwood, Elizabeth (mother of Thomas), 50; her death, 54
- Ellwood, Thomas, 23, 41, 47-8, 125, 148, 153, 168; childhood of, 51-4; visits Peningtons after they have become Quakers, 55-6; becomes a Quaker, 57-60; ill-treatment of, as result, 60-1; visit to Peningtons at Chalfont, 62-3; refuses to take Oath of Allegiance, 65; imprisoned at Oxford, 65; attacked by smallpox, 67-8; takes lessons from Milton, 71-4; imprisoned in Bridewell and Newgate, 75-6; verses by, 76, 83-4, 218; seven years' stay with Peningtons, 77; tutor to young Peningtons, 81-2, 84; affection for Gulielma Springett, 86-7; further imprisonments, 91, 92; travels with Gulielma to meet Fox, 94; courtship of Mary Ellis, 96-8; adventure with Gulielma, 99-102; marries Mary Ellis, 102-103; continues to act as Peningtons' man of business, 103-4; faithful friend to Gulielma while Penn is in America, 173 ff.; in trouble for his writings, 174-80
- Ellwood, Walter (father of Thomas), 47, 50, 54-68
- Emden, colony of Friends at, 149-50
- Fagge, Edward (father of Anne Proude), 2
- Falkner, J. M.: *History of Oxfordshire*, ref., 52
- Faversham, Lord, 189
- Fayrebrother, Dr., 115
- Fell, Rachel, 159
- Fell, Sarah, 84, 141, 150; household account book of, 160
- Fell, Margaret. *See* Fox, Margaret
- Fifth Monarchy Men, 64, 88
- Fire, the Great, 109, 121
- First Publishers of Truth*, ref., 113, 144
- Fisher, Martha, 191
- Fleming, Justice, 87
- Fletcher, Elizabeth, 144
- Ford, Bridget, 185
- Forster, William Edward, 161*n*.
- Fotherly, Thomas, Justice, 175-9
- Fox, George, 22, 27, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 46, 71, 74, 87, 93, 94, 105, 121, 139, 148, 150, 157, 159, 161 and *n*., 165; *Short Journal*, 190-1; *Itinerary Journal*, 190-2; death of, 192-3
- Fox, Margaret (*née* Askew, formerly Fell), 39, 87, 113, 150, 159, 165, 173, 180-4
- Fox, Mary (mother of George Fox), 159
- Fuller, John (Gulielma Springett's tenant), 206
- Fry, Elizabeth, 153
- Gibson, William, 155
- Gigger (or Jiggour), John, 99, 101, 102
- Gloucester, Duke of, 115
- Goldney, Henry, 192
- Gordon: *History of Harting*, ref., 15*n*.
- Gosse, Edmund, ref., 198*n*.
- Gracechurch Street, Quaker meeting in, 192
- Graham: *William Penn*, ref., 116, 139, 144, 158, 164, 186, 189
- Gray, Walter (grandfather of Thomas Ellwood), 50
- Greville, Robert (Baron Brooke), 85
- Gregg, Jane, 161
- Grol, Guelderland, siege of, 3 and *n*.
- Gummere: *The Quaker: a Study in Costume*, ref., 102*n*., 172*n*.
- Gurney sisters, 153
- Haistwell Diary*, ref., 161 and *n*., 163, 190
- Hambly, Loveday, 35, 94, 113, 153
- Hampden, John, 60
- Harsnett, Samuel (later Archbishop of York), 110
- Hasbert, Dr., 149
- Hersent, Anne, 86, 91
- Hess: *The Message of Isaac Penington*, ref., 41
- Hodgkin, Thomas, 81, 202
- Hodgkin, L. V.: *Quaker Saints (A Book of Quaker Saints)*, ref. 38, 40; *A Quaker Saint of Cornwall*, ref., 70; *Romance of the Inward Light*, 192
- Holmes, Elizabeth, 144
- Hounslow Heath, fighting at, 13

- Howard, Luke, of Dover, 149,*156
 Howard, Luke, F.R.S., 82
 Howgill, Francis, 113
 Hubberthorne, Richard, 37
 Huddleston, Fr., 189
 Hull: *William Penn, a Topical Biography*, 108, 110, 112, 114, 119, 120, 125, 142, 164, 198
 Hunger Hill, 148, 153*n.*, 173
- James II, 159, 160, 187; flight of, 190.
See also York, Duke of
 Janney: *Life of William Penn, ref.*, 117, 136, 142, 159, 164, 188, 189
 Jesuits, suspected association of Quakers with, 92
 Jiggour (or Gigger), Rebecca, 99*n.*
 Jones, Robert, 44–5
 Jordans, 41, 47, 137, 172
- Keith, George, 162
 Ken, Bishop, 188–9
 Kerton, Richard, 191
 Kinnersley: *Life of William Penn, ref.*, 194
- Laud, Archbishop, 5*n.*, 30, 141
 Lindsey, Earl of, 156
 Lloyd, Thomas, 188
 Lobdy, Daniel, 149
 Locke, John, 31
 Loe, Thomas, 64, 65, 112–13, 116, 121, 122; death of, 127
 Lollards, the, 60
 Lombard Street, 191
 Louis XIV of France, 117, 189
 Lower, Mary, 184
 Lower, Thomas, 150, 159, 182
 Lowther, Anthony, 121
- Marston Moor, battle of, 108
 Meade, Sarah (*née* Fell), 141, 150
 Meade, William, 141–2, 191, 195
 Milton, John, 31, 71–4, 89–90, 137
 Minshall, Elizabeth, 71*n.*
 Monk, General, 111, 115
 Montier-cap, 64
 More, Henry, 41
 Morley, Herbert, Captain, 14 and *n.*
 Myers: *William Penn's Early Life in Brief, ref.*, 114, 118, 121, 135
- Nayler, James, 57, 58
 Newgate, imprisonments in, 75, 140–2, 147; release from, 80
 Newton, Isaac, 129
 Nicholson: *Conway Letters, ref.*, 41
- Old Bailey, 142
 Orange, Prince of, 3
- Ormonde, Duke of, 121
 Owen, Dr., Dean of Christ Church, 114
 Oxford, Quaker imprisonments at, 64, 65; Quaker sufferings at, 144; illtreatment of women at, 144; William Penn undergraduate at, 114–116; T. Loe, tradesman of, 113
- Paget, Nathan, Dr., 71
 Parker, Alexander, 35, 155, 181
 Parker, Judith, 92
 Parret (or Perot), Edward, 88, 91
 Partridge, Catherine. *See* Springett
 Partridge, Sir Edward, 3, 6, 24
 Pattison, George, 148
 Penington, Edward (son of Isaac), 80
 Penington, Sir Isaac, Alderman (father of Isaac), 30
 Penington, Isaac, 23, 51, 60, 61, 66, 67, 71, 89, 97, 103–4, 125, 148, 162; marriage of, to Mary Springett, 28, 33; youth of, 30–1; religious meditations of, 32; reactions to Quakers, 33–7; settles at Chalfont St. Peter, 37; testimony to Quakers, 38–9; persecuted, 40–1; affectionate nature of, 41–2; imprisonments of, 43; death of, and tributes to, 43–7; influence of, on Gulielma Springett, 46; trust placed in Thomas Ellwood, 86; death of, 47, 171
 Penington, Isaac (son of Isaac), 80, 103–4
 Penington, John (son of Isaac), 47, 80, 81, 155, 172
 Penington, Mary (*née* Proude), 50–1, 60, 61, 68, 75, 97, 103–4, 130, 148, 157, 199; spiritual experiences as child, 3–8; marriage to Sir William Springett, 9–11; literary gifts, 18; opposition to baptism, 20; religious doubts, 21, 26–8; marriage to Isaac Penington, 33; family dissensions when she joins Quakers, 39–40; tribute to Isaac, 45–6; trust placed in Thomas Ellwood, 86–7; persecution of, 90–1; death of, 165, 171–2
 Penington, Mary (daughter of Isaac). *See* Wharley
 Penington, William (brother of Isaac), 41, 75, 76, 84
 Penington, William (son of Isaac), 80
 Penn, Folio, *ref.*, 125, 128–34, 140, 144, 145, 147, 149, 195 ff.
 Penn, Gulielma Maria (*née* Springett), wife of William, 2, 66, 94, 126,

Penn, Gulielma Maria—*continued*

148, 154; birth of, 20, 109; influence of stepfather, 46; attacked by smallpox, 68–9; wealth of, 80; sought after as bride, 84–6; her journeys to Bristol, 91; Devon, 94; Sussex, 99–102; North, 87; sings to Milton, 137; engagement, 137, and marriage of, to William Penn, 152–4; success as housekeeper, 161–3; loneliness of, 171–3; in illness, sends for Thomas Ellwood, 174, 180; letters to Margaret Fox, 180–4; perplexities during Penn's absence, 184; strain upon, of Penn's dangerous life, 103; legend of her visit to Court at St. Germain's, 194; death, 195–197; buried at Jordans, 137

Penn, Gulielma Maria (names given to two of William's daughters, both dying in infancy), (1) 157, 158; (2) 187

Penn, Lætitia (daughter of William), 170, 199

Penn, Margaret Lady (William's mother), 109, 110, 120, 155, 158, 171

Penn, Margaret (William's sister), 110, 120

Penn, Margaret (William's daughter), 158

Penn, Richard (brother of William), 110, 157

Penn, Springett (son of William), 2, 10, 104, 158, 170, 192, 195; death of, 199–200

Penn, Sir William, Admiral (William's father), 108, 111, 112, 114, 115, 118, 135; death of, 142–3

Penn, William, 22, 46, 47, 51, 64, 106, 148; testimony to Isaac Penington, 31–2; birth of, 108; has smallpox, 109; boyhood, 109–14; to Oxford, 114; at Coronation, 115; expulsion, 116; affection for America, 116; goes on Grand Tour, 117; to sea with his father, 118–19; legal training, 119; becomes Quaker after hearing Loe in Ireland, 122; father's displeasure, 123–4; first sees Guilelma, 124; to Loe's deathbed, 127; *Truth Exalted*, 127–8; *The Sandy Foundation Shaken*, 128; *Innocency with her Open Face*, 128; *No Cross, No Crown*, 117, 128–34, 136, 198; imprisoned in Tower, 128; released, 136; visits Peningtons at Amersham, 136–7; to Ireland,

Penn, William—*continued*

136–40; *Irish Journal*, 138, 139; arrested, 141–2; Penn-Meade Trial, 141–2; in Newgate, 142; father's death, 143; indignation with Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, 144–5; *Fruits of Solitude*, 145, 198; arrested and imprisoned, 145–7; missionary visit to Continent, 149; marriage to Gulielma, 152–4; missionary visit to Kent and Sussex, 155–7; births and early deaths of first three children, 157–8; visits North of England with Gulielma, 160–1; letters to wife and children on leaving for Pennsylvania, 166 ff.; return after two years, 186 ff.; *An Apology for Himself*, 187–8; suspicion against, due to friendship with James II, 189–90; letter to M. Fox on G. Fox's death, 193; describes deaths of his wife and son, 194 ff.; second marriage to H. Callowhill, 199; *An Essay Towards the Peace of Europe*, 198; his wig, 213–15; certificate to former servant, 219; buried at Jordans, 137

Penn, William (son of above), 170

Penney (ed.): *Experiences in the Life of Mary Penington*, ref., 9, 191n., 203n.

Pennsylvania, Penn's early love for, 164; land granted to Penn, 165

Pennsylvania Historical Society, 155, 207 ff.

Pepys: *Diary*, ref., 115, 118, 121, 128, 141

Pepys, Mrs. Samuel, 118, 131

Pepys, Thomas, Dr., 115

Perrot Controversy, 93

Petre, Fr., 189

Philadelphia, Penn's statue in, 126

Plague, the Great, 89, 119–20

Portsmouth, Duchess of, 189

Preston, John, sermons of, 4 and n.

Proude (or Preva), Anne, Lady, 2–3

Proude (or Preva), Sir John, 2–3

Prynne, William, 5

Puritan officers, sacrifices made by, in Civil War, 19

Purvis, J., 181

Quaker Act (1662), 88

Quakers, Lady Springett's dream, 27; reactions of Peningtons to, 33–7; influence of, on the Ellwoods, 57–60; suspected of association with Jesuits, 92; sufferings of, at Oxford, 144; in Kent and Sussex,

Quakers—*continued*

- 154; in the North, 161; lengthy persecution of, 163, 190
- Rance (or Raunce), John, Dr., 74
- Restoration, 63, 70, 115
- Rickmansworth, Basing House, 154, 157–9
- Rigge, Ambrose, 45
- Ringmer Church, bust of Sir William Springett in, 19, 85
- Roberts, G., 150
- Robinson, Sir John, 141, 146–7, 162
- Robinson: *Penn and the Penn Country*, *ref.*, 30, 40, 50
- Rouse, John, 150, 191
- Russel, William, 41, 137
- Rutherford, Samuel, 43
- St. Germain's, exiled Court at, 194
- St. Mary Pattons, church, 2
- St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol, 143
- St. Olave's Street, birthplace of William Penn, 108
- Sandwich, Lord, 115
- Saumur, Huguenot college at, 117
- Savoy Palace (later Hospital), 191
- Savoy, Peter, Earl of, 191
- Shacklewell, Friends' School at, 81
- Shelden, Sir John, 146
- Shoemaker of Dover. *See* Howard, Luke
- Smith, Henry, sermons of, 4 and *n.*
- Smith, S., 162
- Spencer, Robert, Earl of Sunderland, 117
- Springett, Anthony, 18
- Springett, Catherine, Madam (*née* Partridge), 3, 6–7, 9–10, 24–5
- Springett, Gulielma Maria. *See* Penn
- Springett, Herbert, 6, 99, 102
- Springett, Sir Herbert, 9
- Springett, John, 11, 20, 104
- Springett, Mary, Lady *née* Proude. *See* Pennington, Mary
- Springett, Sir Thomas, 9
- Springett, Sir William, 6, 23, 46, 80, 99, 200; marriage to Mary Proude, 9–11; part played in Civil War, 12–14; illness and death of, 14–18, 200, 203–5; bust of, in Ringmer Church, 85
- Starling, Sir Samuel, Lord Mayor of London, 140, 146
- Stevenson, R. L., 198
- Stillingfleet, Dr., later Bishop of Worcester, 128, 208
- Strickland: *Life of Mary Beatrice*, 194
- Sunderland, Earl of. *See* Spencer
- Supremacy, Oath of, 65
- Sussex in the Civil War*, *ref.*, 14*n.*, 15*n.*, 17*n.*, 19*n.*
- Swarthmoor daughters. *See* Fell
- Swarthmoor Hall, 152, 160
- Sympson, William, 35
- Taylor, Christopher, 44
- Thame, Free Grammar School at, 51–3
- Thirnbeck MSS., *ref.*, 182, 187
- Thompson, Francis, *ref.*, 200
- Tichborn, Sir Benjamin, 174–9
- Toleration Act, 163, 164, 190
- Topsham, 94
- Tower, Penn's imprisonment in, 128 130, 135, 136; his birth near, 108
- Tregangeeves Farm, 94, 152
- Trevelyan: *English Social History*, *ref.*, 3, 18
- Turner, Robert, 165
- Underhill, Evelyn: *Letters*, *ref.*, 112
- Uniformity, Act of, 116
- Valiant Sixty, 22, 34
- van der Schuren, Margaret (*née* Jasper). *See* Penn (William's mother)
- Vaughan, Lord John (Earl of Carbury), 85
- Waller, Sir William, 14
- Waltham Abbey, Friends' School at, 81
- Watkins, Morgan, 91, 92, 93
- Webb: *The Penns and Peningtons*, *ref.*, 113, 165, 182
- Welcome* (ship), 170–1
- Wells, John, 176
- Wenman, Lord, 54, 65
- Weymouth, Earl of (title refused by Admiral Penn), 143
- Wharley, Mary (*née* Penington), 80, 81, 82, 216–18
- Wheeler Street, Penn's arrest after meeting in, 145
- Whitney: *John Woolman*, *ref.*, 153–4
- Whitsuntide, importance of, to Quakers, 38
- William III, 189
- Williams, Nathaniel, 172
- Williamson, Sir Joseph, 155
- Wilson, Thomas, 6, 11
- Wood, Anthony, 52
- Woolman, John, 132, 153–4
- Worcester Gaol, Fox imprisoned in, 159
- Worminghurst Place, 158, 161–2, 170, 179, 185
- York, Duke of, 99, 115, 119, 123, 136, 187, 188. *See also* James II
- Zachary, Thomas, 27

